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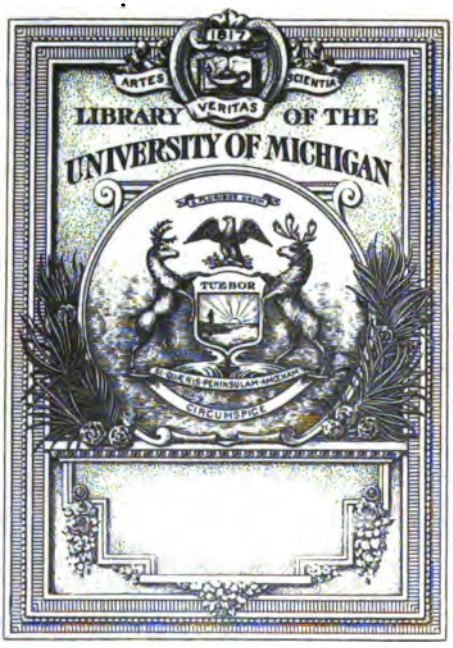

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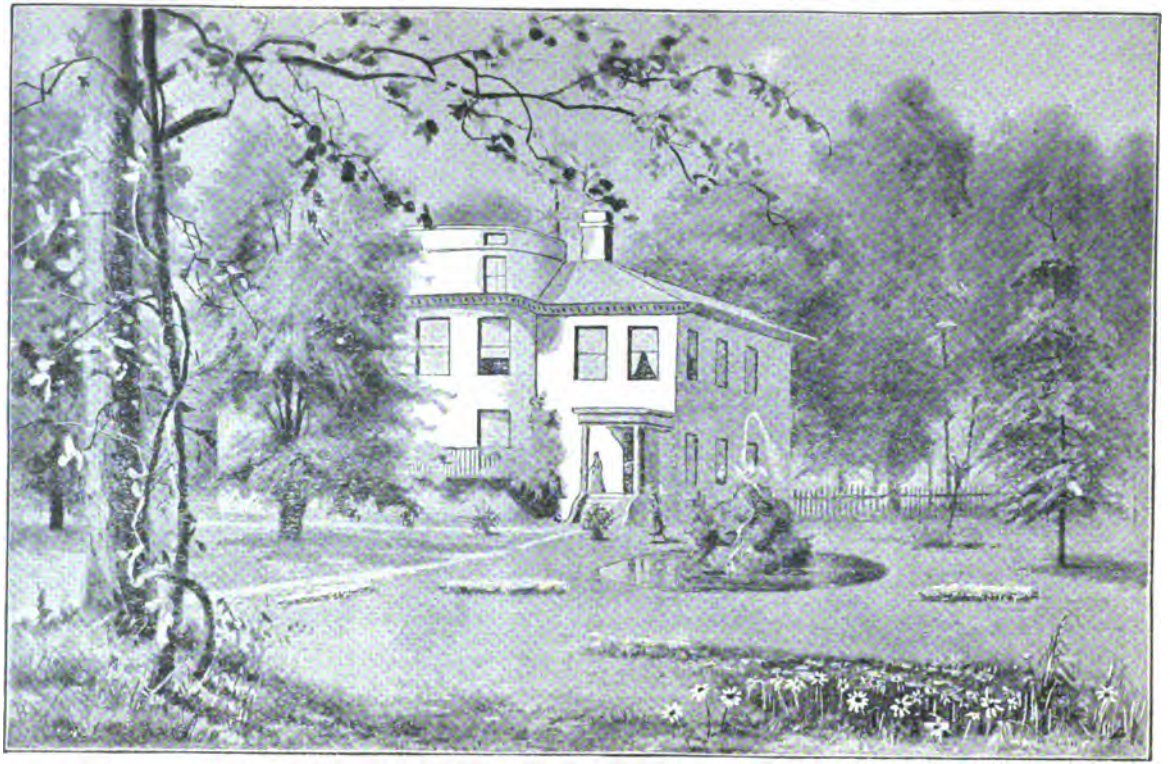

DENESMORE PLACE.

THE

WORST FOE,

A

TEMPERANCE STORY,

BY

GRACE STRONG.

(NINTH EDITION.)

COLUMBUS, O.:
WM. G. HUBBARD & CO., PUBLISHERS.
1874.

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1888.

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DEDICATION.

To my mother, who taught my infant feet to walk, who directed my lisping accents aright, who carefully guarded me through helplessness until I reached the age of accountability, and who has ever since been my best companion and counsellor, whose tender encouragement nerved me for this effort, this book is affectionately dedicated.

AUTHOR.

THE WORST FOE.

CHAPTER I.

THE DENESMORES.

"A soul as full of worth, as void of pride,
Which nothing seeks to show, or needs to hide."
—*Pope.*

"Woman! experience might have told me
That all must love thee who behold thee."
—*Byron.*

THE Denesmore place stands in the suburbs of the thriving town of Staunton. To its natural loveliness the decorative hand of art has added many charms.

The grand old house, old enough to be venerable, yet showing no signs of decay, nestles in the bosom of a magnificent grove of trees. A few acres in the rear of the house—all that are left of a once large farm—are carefully cultivated. The town, rapidly growing to a city, encroaches more and more upon the Denesmore homestead, threatening the ultimate destruction of its groves and meadows.

In one corner of the pasture grazes a group of soft-eyed Jerseys. Hives of bees are placed

near the beautiful flower-garden, and their busy hum the long summer day through, lulls one to repose. At the bottom of a hill to which a foot-path leads, is a bubbling spring whose sparkling waters supply the needs of the family. A superb English mastiff eyes with dignified glance the casual visitor, and announces his coming by a bark which has in it as much of friendliness as anger.

John Denesmore has for twenty-five years occupied this coveted home. Here he and his wife began their married life together. Here their children were born and grew to maturity. He had seen the little village grow to a thriving town, approaching nearer and nearer to his home, devouring bit by bit his once extensive farm, converting his field lots into town lots and streets, greatly enhancing the value of the land and increasing Mr. Denesmore's wealth. Where once grew fields of waving corn were now tall brick houses. To-day, as we look either way up or down the long avenue, we see pleasant and attractive homes of a prosperous people. Some say that nature unadorned is more lovely than when man has added his improvements, but such is not our theory. Man's intelligence, co-operating with nature, can make what was once beautiful, more beautiful still. Nature is thus guided and aided by human intelligence, and the rugged grandeur

softened and made more pleasing to the eye.

The square stone mansion, with bay windows above and below, on either side, speaks of wealth, elegance and ease, yet so plain and home-like as to preclude the idea of aristocracy. The lawn in front reaches down to the street, which extends south, and east of the house is the shady grove, where the cows can find shelter in the heat of the day. Below the hill is the crystal brook, fed by the spring we have mentioned. Four little feet have often paddled in its crystal waters in the days gone by, only giving up the pleasure when age and custom forbid it. All along the hillside are grape arbors, yielding the most luscious fruits in their season. The grove on the west presents varieties of shade trees. Here families of birds have held unmolested possession for many generations. Here they built their nests, reared their young, and sent them forth into the world. The eastern view is the delight of the family. Covered with nature's richest carpeting of green—summer-houses here and there, a sparkling fountain in the centre, and as the heavens are more beautiful at night when dotted with brilliant stars, so this scene is made more beautiful by the myriads of stars of the vegetable kingdom sprinkled all over it. Flowers of every genus known to this clime may be found here in their perfect state. The children of Mr.

Denesmore, when younger than they are now, thought these grounds the home of fairies. Though these children have reached that mature age at which fairies and myths fade, yet to them it is still an enchanted spot. Close to the fence tall maples shade the streets. Here many a weary soul, bowed beneath life's cares and anxieties, pauses to lean against the rail, and while the gentle zephyrs, bearing the sweetest fragrance of flowers, cool his heated brow, he wonders if Heaven can be more lovely than the scene within.

It was a balmy day in June, and all nature was robed in her most comely garb. Seated near the bay window are Mrs. Denesmore and her daughter, earnestly gazing at the landscape so dear to them, and listening to the distant hum which wells up from the busy life of the growing young city. A gentle breeze wafts the mingled perfume of roses and other aromatic plants through the open casement. A look of happy contentment is on the face of both mother and daughter. Mrs. Densemore's age sits so lightly upon her that she really seems youthful. Her daughter, just budding into womanhood, is like a half blown rose at early morn, when the dewdrops sparkle like diamonds in the sunlight. Their conversation has been pleasant, for no other than pleasant thoughts could produce such happy contentment as beams from the face of each.

"We have great cause to be happy, Pauline," said Mrs. Denesmore. "They have come back again, and your hours of loneliness are over." Mrs. Denesmore's voice was kind and gentle as herself, and there was a sweet spirit of devotion in her manner which made her a model mother.

"Yes, mother, God has been very good to us. We have this beautiful home, I have you and father, and am spared to both of you; and now brother has returned to us, and—" She blushed and hesitated as if there were something more to say, which she would not mention even in the presence of her mother.

"I understand your hesitation, Pauline," said her mother with a smile. "Your pleasure is not alone in the return of your brother, but in a certain young gentleman who will be with him. You would like to pay him some compliment, but hesitate to speak his worth even in my presence."

"Not exactly, mother," said Pauline, her pretty face becoming serious, and a shadow of pain passing over it. "I could not speak too highly of him, but I was interrupted by a thought."

"What was it?"

"When Maria was here last we were talking of William, and I asked her why she did not congratulate me, showing her my engagement ring. She looked startled, and with a frown

on her pretty face, said, she did not think my choice worthy of congratulation. What do you think her objections to William were?"

"I cannot imagine—I never heard anything against him!"

"Nor has any one else. When I asked her to explain, she said, apparently half in jest and half in earnest: 'His ancestry could not have been much. He's only a poor lawyer and an adventurer, whose sole ambition is to marry a wealthy girl and be elevated into the position his ambition longs for.'"

"Oh, never mind her, Pauline. We all know that Maria is a spoiled child, and did we not know that she does not love William I should be inclined to think her jealous," said Mrs. Denesmore, while her fingers worked deftly with some fancy materials she was constructing. "I hope you defended William, Pauline. I don't see how any one could so mistake real worth for avarice."

"Had it been any one else, mother," returned Pauline, "I would not have cared, for all the world cannot change my opinion of William. But you know brother Guy loves Maria Day, and what I have long feared was fully confirmed that evening; she is not only spoiled, but envious, petulant, selfish, and wholly unworthy to be my brother's wife. A woman's influence over a man like Guy is great.

One less noble and trusting would not heed her voice, but Guy is so susceptible that the woman he loves can lead him to Heaven or plunge him into eternal woe."

Mrs. Denesmore watched the anxious face of her daughter, and fancying that she was slightly vexed at the remark of Maria about her lover, she said:

"You must make great allowance for her, my dear. As I told you, Maria is a spoiled child. If Guy were her husband, she would find herself in a different atmosphere, and gradually grow to respect the feelings of others. And besides the important step is not yet taken, and Guy's judgment is too good for him to take it until he knows what he is about."

"I know brother better than his own mother. He loves Maria, and even if they are not engaged, it will be hard for him to give her up, though he should discover imperfections in her," said the anxious sister with a sigh. This brief conversation had driven the sunlight from the faces of both mother and daughter. Perfect bliss is impossible in this world. Anxious cares for others, if nothing else, will at times o'ershadow our happiness despite all we may do.

"Helloa, Pauline, what's the matter?" demanded the hearty, good-natured husband and father, entering the sitting-room at this moment. "You look as if you were getting

ready for a funeral—what's the trouble? Why, mother, too, is looking sober as a judge."

"We were talking of Guy, father," said Pauline, after a momentary embarrassment.

"Of Guy? Why, he is in good health, with fair prospects for the future. Were you calculating on the chances of his failure—borrowing trouble? I have always boasted that there was not a pessimist among us, but here I find you both looking solemn as judges at some event that will never happen."

"We were speaking of Guy and Maria, father—and—and I will tell you candidly that I don't believe she is worthy of him," said Pauline, her eyes drooping beneath the strong glance of her father.

"Oh, well, Guy will find that out in time, never fear," said Mr. Denesmore, laying his hat on the sofa at his side. "He is a student of human nature, and if there are bad qualities in her nature they will be discovered by him, you can rest assured of that. I guess Guy is coming in now. 'Talk of angels and you can hear the flutter of their wings.'"

The eyes of parents and daughter were turned with fondness and anxiety toward the fine, intelligent looking young man who had just entered.

Guy Denesmore was all a fond parent might ask. He was obedient, kind, with no ignoble qualities, and enough ambition to stimulate him

to action, yet not enough to trample under foot the rights of others. Guy was a merry, unselfish lad, and, if he possessed any fault, it was an overweening confidence in his friends and a tendency to have his actions directed by their desires. This weakness, if it was a weakness, was more the outpouring of a generous heart than a real fault. He was a model youth. See him now, as he sits talking with his parents and sister, and one can but feel perfect confidence in his manliness and integrity. His mother he held in the highest affection. Her wise counsel directed his way until he arrived at the age of maturity, and she is still the sharer of his hopes and disappointments. His father, both himself and Pauline always regarded as the embodiment of all that was good and noble, yet it was to the mother they ever appealed in times of petty tribulation.

The Denesmore family consists only of the four whom we have mentioned. Mr. Denesmore is nearing three-score, but having no mental or physical ailment, he was a well-preserved old man, with but few streaks of gray in his hair, and an almost youthful light in his eyes. A little above medium height, features regular but not handsome, eyes beaming with good humor, kindness and sympathy for erring mankind,—he is always ready to give a helping hand when needed, either by substantial gifts or

encouraging words to the downhearted. Such we find the generous, prosperous merchant, Mr. Denesmore.

Guy, their only son, is twenty-four, the interesting age when the intellect, like spring buds, is unfolding every hour, and the anxious inquiries, "What will our boy be?" are answered by seeing the kind of a man he has made. Guy has fulfilled his parents' most fond anticipation. He is tall and handsome, broad-chested, with noble features and large brown eyes. His well-formed head is thickly covered with chestnut curls, and his large brown eyes are both expressive and tender, sparkling with humor and beaming with intelligence. Could fond parents desire a more promising son?

Pauline, the light of the Denesmore household, is a gentle, loving girl of twenty-two, a little below medium height, with a countenance intellectually pale, large brown eyes, a shade darker than her brother's, and she possesses a rich heritage in a happy, sunny temperament, which, since her existence, has never been shadowed by more than a passing cloud. In addition to being blessed with kind Christian parents, they had every advantage wealth could give.

Four years previous to the opening of our story, Guy brought home with him one vacation, and introduced into his family, a college

friend named William Strasmore, who immediately engrafted himself into the good graces and friendship of the entire family in spite of the difference in their circumstances. He not only won the friendship of Guy and esteem of his parents, but the heart of the fair Pauline, as we have seen. William was a self-made man, having but little recollection of his parents.

He was brought up by a good, industrious farmer, who gave him the scant "schooling" which the district afforded, and when he showed a thirst for knowledge, Mr. Johns, whose limited means could not provide for the boy, advised William to go to the nearest village and seek the most profitable employment, that he might work his way through college.

"But remember, Will," said Mr. Johns, "should you fail, you still have a home here."

Taking an affectionate leave of his foster parents, he left the old homestead and went out to seek his fortune. After long years, by steady industry, he worked his way through college. He entered about the same time Guy did, and having many noble traits in common, they soon became fast friends. The history of the youth's gallant struggle with poverty greatly endeared him to the noble-hearted Guy. The end of their college days came at last. William thought of procuring employment for a year to

enable him to study law, his chosen profession, as his slender means were exhausted. Guy, who learned his object, insisted that he should accompany him home, saying he would consider it a privilege to loan him sufficient funds to finish his studies. William declared that it was more than he could accept of a friend, but Guy was so persistent that he promised at last to consider the matter of spending the vacation at his friend's home. He did, and it proved the happiest vacation to the Denesmore's they had ever known, and one which was always a pleasure to look back on.

GRACE STRONG.

UNIV. OF MICH.

We earnestly appeal to

MINISTERS OF THE GOSPEL.—Read "The Worst Foe" and from you will come the hearty, soul-inspiring AMEN! when the last page is finished.

CATHOLIC PRIESTS.—Read this book, for in it you will find favorable mention.

VOTERS.—Read this book that you may vote more intelligently upon one of the most vital issues of the day.

PARENTS.—Read this book and you will feel a deeper interest in the protection of your children from evil influences than you ever did before.

YOUNG LADIES.—Read "The Worst Foe," and you will learn to shrink from its very appearance as you would from the adder.

YOUNG MEN.—We beseech you to read this book and become familiar with "Life's dark paths," without learning from sad, yea! bitter experience.

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The book has been heartily endorsed by Ministers of all denominations; by College Presidents from every State and Canada; by Scholars from every branch of the Literary world; by the Press, both religious and secular; by everybody that reads it.

To one and all we wish to say, examine this book. Read Chapter xxiv. and xxv., and for these alone you will never regret having added it to your library.

THE PUBLISHERS.

GRACE STRONG.

UNIV. OF CALIF.

CHAPTER II.

THE DAYS.

"Change that discontented air,
Frowns become not one so fair,
'Tis not love disturbs thy rest;
Love's a stranger to thy breast."

—*Byron.*

FROM the home of the Denesmore s we ask the reader's attention to the house of the Days. There is a marked contrast in the two places as there is in the people who inhabit them, though both families are highly respected, moving in the best society in Staunton. The house of the Days was farther up town and far more aristocratic than Mr. Denesmore's, more elegantly finished and furnished. Grand and proud as the home of some lord, it stands in the centre of a large grass plat without tree or shrub, enclosed by stone wall and reached by a flight of broad stone steps.

With the aid of art and accomplishments Mrs. Day might be thought handsome, but a close observation of her features would discover signs of selfishness, which, despite the tall graceful figure and regular features, mars her beauty. Her eyes are large and dark, her hair jet black and

yet her complexion fair, and her age difficult to determine, yet one could see she was on the sunny side of life. Reclining on a sofa, one jeweled hand idly toying with the leaves of a novel is the counterpart of Mrs. Day, though many years younger. Despite Mrs. Day's youthful appearance one can see that they are mother and daughter. It is Maria, the only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Day, an acknowledged belle, though a petted and spoiled beauty.

Seated near the window is a bright eyed boy of ten summers, who is deeply buried in his book, yet not so completely lost as not to hear what the ladies say. Mark was the youngest of the Day family, and a remarkable boy he was indeed. Never did a child seemed to possess so many contradictory characteristics. He was a lad but poorly understood, and while some declared him to be the worst boy in town, others said he was the best. Mark had, among other sterling characteristics, wonderful firmness of purpose. He was a generous, fun-loving boy, up to all sorts of mischief, yet with a tender heart for the oppressed, and despised hollow mockery and show.

"Why don't you make Guy declare himself, Maria," said Mrs. Day after a few moments spent in tapping her knee with her fan. "I know he loves you, and I think it is your fault that you are not already engaged. I don't believe in long courtships. You and Guy have had since

you were children to make up your minds about each other." Mrs. Day here placed her fan to her beautiful mouth to conceal the smile that played thereon, and half in jest and half in earnest, continued, "Your father was not long in proposing, and he was as particular as the average."

"Well, I guess papa hadn't a silly mother and sister to lecture him on morals and manners," said Miss Day half spitefully, while a frown gathered on her pretty brow.

"Do you think, Maria, that they are trying to turn him against you?"

"I am very well convinced they are."

"Has he been less attentive since he came home?"

"No, he thinks too well of me to slight me, but I know them so well and hate them accordingly, especially that pious fraud, Pauline," snapped Maria, angrily raising her body to an upright position on the sofa and drawing her feet under her, while she dropped her novel on the carpet, "we can agree on nothing—nothing at all. They neither one like me, though Pauline is no better than I, if she does do mission and Sunday School work. You remember the storm last summer, mother, which detained me at Denesmores so late that I was forced to stay all night? There was such fearful lightning, and I'm so afraid of lightning. Pauline saw I was

frightened, and asked me to share her room, and said if I was nervous she would read to me. Of course I could not listen to reading and she began to lecture me about fear. She said there were evils more to be dreaded than storms of thunder and lightnings—evils which destroy body and soul; that we could all do something to remedy them. I began to feel ridiculous in the presence of this fanatic; and when she put her arm around my neck and begged me never, for the love of humanity, to use or encourage the use of wine or alcoholic beverages, I don't know whether I was most amused or indignant. She feared I did not realize the harm it was doing in our land. What if I do sip a little wine when I am weak, and what if I do offer it to my callers on New Years day, is it any reason that I will either become a drunkard or make drunkards of others? Besides it is fashionable, and I told her so. The best people in the world do it, and why should not I? But she implored me to forsake fashion for principle. Did you ever hear anything so ridiculous? As though anyone need forsake either. She got her Bible and I was forced to listen while she read, and then she knelt and prayed just as if she was some preacher, and I never saw or heard anything so silly. I can go to church and listen to a sermon, even if I don't believe in it, for there one can study fashions, but a prayer to a God of whose very existence we

have no proof, always tires me. Her prayer was a direct insult to us, for it was for the advancement of the temperance cause, which you know we have ridiculed, and she knew it. That is the way she insults me, or by pretending to love and pray for me, and then as soon as I am away she will tell Guy how hard-hearted a sinner I am, and wholly unworthy to be any Christian man's wife. *Christian indeed!* Deliver me from all such Christians."

Maria had worked herself up to a pitch of frenzy over her imaginary wrongs, and forgot for the time being her brother, who had become so absorbed in the acrimonious assault of his sister on Pauline Denesmore, that he laid his book aside and listened. Evidently the boy was much displeased, for Pauline was not only his warm friend, but he was a member of her Sunday School class. He checked his first impulse to make an angry retort for he remembered that she had taught him that, "A wrathful man stirreth up strife, but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife."

His dark eye flashed with indignation, his breast heaved, and when Maria had concluded with all the scorn her pent up passion had at command, he could control himself no longer and burst forth with:

"Maria, have you determined to serve the devil, that you must call the best woman in

Staunton a hypocrite, because she tries to make people better? If all women would pray and work for temperance as Pauline does, there wouldn't be so many ragged children on the streets."

"Oh-ho, you are a convert, are you," asked Maria sarcastically.

"Yes, and I'm not ashamed of it either," the boy bravely answered.

"I suppose you will turn a temperance missionary?"

"I'm not goin' to sit by and hear a young woman who has been such a friend to me as Pauline Denesmore has, abused. 'She no better than you?' Did you ever make any body better? No, but she has. You used to scold me, slap me, drive me from the room when I was in your way, or your aristocrats were here. You made me hunt amusement in the streets among idle boys, and there Pauline found me little better than a heathen. She told me stories that I never heard at home, and of a grander world than this; that's something you and mother never think of; you are too busy trying to enjoy this. She taught me it was wrong to quarrel and fight, so I have not had a row for two years, and I don't care how many chips the boys put on their shoulders, I'm not goin' to knock 'em off. She made me so much better that you even let me come in here occasionally, and I never make you

ashamed when your grandees come, by shaving a poodle, or exchanging somebody's hat for the old hat the gardener threw away. You say I'm better—everybody says I'm better;—now who made me better? It wasn't you."

"Do you think it was Pauline and all her nonsense?" asked Maria as spitefully as she could.

"Yes, it was Pauline and all her goodness."

"Her goodness!—it's her hypocrisy. She wants people to talk about her, and so acts out a lie. She and you had better start a branch missionary society."

The boy was not equal to the bitter sarcasm of his sister. All his good impulses were swept aside, and almost blind with passion, he seized his straw hat which lay on the floor at his side, and said:

"I'm going right to Guy Denesmore and tell him every word you've said. I'll teach you what it is to slander a good girl." And the indignant youth left the room, leaving his mother and sister both screaming for him to return.

Little attention had been paid to Mark until he threatened to tell Guy, and knowing his determined spirit, both mother and daughter became alarmed at once. Both sorely regretted having spoken so freely in his presence.

"Why didn't we send him from the room," said Maria in dismay. "It would be just like him to tell Guy every word," and as the willful

boy could not be brought back, the spoiled beauty began to cry.

Mrs. Day, who had weak nerves, declared she was entirely upset by that horrible boy. Those temperance fanatics and Sunday School people were ruining him. She used her smelling salts to keep from fainting, and had a servant start out to bring Mark back; but too late, too much time had already been lost, the boy could not be found.

Mark Day inherited his willfulness from his father, while he drew his gentleness and kindness from his weak, almost silly, but good-hearted mother. There were but two members of the Day family whom we have not introduced. Mr. Thomas Day, the father of Mark, was a shrewd business man of the world, who had a will of his own closely bordering on stubbornness. He entertained the idea that he was master of himself and those under him, thanks to none but himself. He did not believe in the existence of a God, and was one of those materialistic gentlemen, too intelligent to endorse the old fogy notions of the Bible. He was a purely intellectual infidel, who took delight in deriding and ridiculing the people called Christians. He did not know whether a man had a soul or not, and did not care; he only found himself in this world, and resolved to have a good time while here, and take his chances on there being any hereafter.

He believed there was no harm and much comfort derived from the social glass; as for a man becoming a drunkard, that was quite a different thing. Every man should have his guage, and go no farther. Because some men ate too much beefsteak for their health it was no reason all mankind should discard beefsteak; why not the same rule apply to liquor. Mr. Day rejoiced in being called a liberalist in everything.

He was regarded by his liberal friends as a model husband and father, and though he did supply the temporal wants of his family, yet when crossed in any way, they received the full benefit of the disturbed tranquility of his mind. The eldest son, Ernest Day, is a fast young man, who, with all his father's inflexible will, possesses a more revengeful spirit than Maria. He was twenty-seven years of age at the time of our story, and like his father, a skeptic and believer in the social glass. From arguing against the temperance fanatics, he came to hate the men and women who would restrain his liberties.

Maria Day was the favorite of her parents and spoiled accordingly. Like her brother she worships no God save self, and has no higher motive than the gratification of her pride and her intense dislike of those who oppose her.

Mischievous Mark Day was a puzzle to every body. When only four years of age he was the

budding promise of a bad boy, full of impudence and profanity, which shocked his mother and amused his father. He was so continually in boyish mischief that even at home he acquired the name of an incorrigible boy. But for the past two years he had been trying to do right for right's sake. Not until lately, however, had his friends become aware of the change in him, and no one seemed able to tell the cause. His teacher extolled him for his industry and gentlemanly deportment. The boy who had promised only to become a champion prize fighter, now bid fair to become a refined gentleman. Gradually Mark was winning the confidence of all, and was no longer dreaded by his mother and sister. But when he completely lost his temper his old willfulness got the better of him, as we have seen, just when the child was making his strongest effort to do right. Christ rebuked Peter for his fiery zeal when he cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest, and bade him put up his sword, but dear reader, be not too quick to condemn Mark. He had not yet learned to rely in such trials wholly on One mighty to save. He had trusted in himself alone, and as is always the result in such cases, he was too weak to resist the temptation.

CHAPTER III.

WILLIAM STRASMORE.

"O happiness! our being, end and aim!
Good, pleasure, ease, content! what e'er thy name,
That something still which prompts the eternal sigh,
For which we bear to live or dare to die."

—*Essay on Man.*

"What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than Heaven pursue."

—*Pope.*

WE must ask our readers to go back with us four years in our story. Pauline, who had just returned home from a female college where her education had been completed, is flitting here and there about the old place, experiencing only the joy which a child can feel on rejoining her parents after a long absence.

"I will never leave them again," she thought as she noticed the exquisite pleasure it gave her parents to have her with them once more. She had preceded her brother a day or two, but he was now expected in a few hours. He had been to a different institution, and having completed his education, save his professional course, wrote

home to his parents that one year more would finish that, and he would soon establish himself in his native town as an M. D.

Pauline, having read her brother's letter, superintended the arrangement of his room and the room of the young friend he was to bring with him. She prepared boquets of the choicest flowers, and made the rooms fragrant as blooming gardens. Guy's room was in the southeast corner of the building on the second floor; his friend was to occupy one equally elegant on the opposite side of the hall. Everything was done that love and taste could suggest to make the return of the brother, and visit of his friend a pleasant event.

The Denesmore carriage was sent to the depot to meet Guy and his friend. It was with a feeling akin to timidity that William Strasmore took a seat in the carriage. Mr. Denesmore was at the depot in person to welcome his son and his son's friend. When William felt the hearty grasp of this honest man's hand and heard the earnest welcome with which he was greeted, he felt that his visit would be no unpleasant intrusion on the family reunion. He found in the father the same kindly, open, manly countenance he had so much admired in the son. His highly sensitive nature would make him feel like an intruder, in spite of all his efforts to feel composed, until Mr. Denesmore's conversation

changed his thoughts. When they reached the house, William had only time to gaze for a moment on the beautiful surroundings, when his quick eye caught a glimpse of two smiling faces at the window, which vanished the moment they were discovered, and a moment later Mrs. Denesmore and Pauline appeared hurrying down the white pebbled walk to the carriage to greet the son and brother.

When their greetings were over, Guy presented his friend, and William fancied, as he bowed to her, that he saw a tint on Pauline's face vying with the pink rose at her throat. Mrs. Denesmore was one of those kind, motherly ladies, who, in her joy at her son's return would not forget his friend.

"I am glad Guy persuaded you to come with him," she said, holding his hand as he thought his own mother would have done. "We were afraid from the letters he wrote that you would not come; we shall do all we can to make this a pleasant vacation."

What could young Strasmore say more than to thank her? Mrs. Denesmore was at William's side as they walked up the lawn path to the front door, while Pauline tripped along by the side of her brother, and Mr. Denesmore superintended the transfer of their luggage.

The young travelers were shown to their rooms. To Guy never did the old home seem so delightful, while to William it was a veritable paradise.

As he stood looking from his window on the picture, his pleasure manifested itself through the sparkle of his clear blue eye. His was an elegant form, tall and commanding, with limbs and features well moulded, and an expression which represented a heart in sympathy with mankind. The hair was neither chestnut nor golden, but a brilliant brown, which seemed, as it fell to his ears, to give dignity to his intelligent face. The thin lips were indicative of firmness of purpose and decision of character. He was one of those who could enter into another's joy or sorrow, and make himself agreeable under all circumstances, without swerving from the right.

After rest and dinner the young people spent the evening in the parlor. Music is usually the choice of young and old, especially when they possess such voices as Pauline, Guy and William. Pauline was an excellent pianist, and after rendering some instrumental music, they naturally drifted into song. William possessed an excellent bass voice, Guy a superb tenor, and Pauline a fine soprano.

Mr. and Mrs. Denesmore shared the quiet pleasure of their children. It was so pleasant to have them at home once more. The old house had seemed so lonely when they were away, and now all the life and gayety which had filled it when in childhood their two children romped about the rooms and halls, seemed suddenly restored.

But Mrs. Denesmore reflected that they were no longer children. Guy had reached man's estate, and his future was supposed to be mapped out. When his professional studies were over he would marry Maria Day, and settle down in his own town. The mother knew he would be very happy and thought he might well be, for surely it would be a marriage made in Heaven. She had none of those evil thoughts of Maria Day of which she had been accused. Neither Pauline nor her mother had ever entertained a real harsh thought against the spoiled beauty.

But would sorrow ever come to the gentle, trusting Pauline? the mother asked herself. Surely not! One so good, so pure and lovely as Pauline should not suffer. She had been so busy with her thoughts as to the future of her children, she had for the time being, lost the song they were singing, but now like an answer to her mental interrogatories, all three voices rang in her ears:

"I love thee, I love thee, pass under the rod."

Mrs. Denesmore was too sensible to regard this as an omen, but in after years when storm-tossed and racked by apprehensions of greater evil and miseries in the future, her mind often reverted to that evening and its almost prophetic words:

"I love thee, I love thee, pass under the rod."

Her strangely pleasant and yet painful reflec-

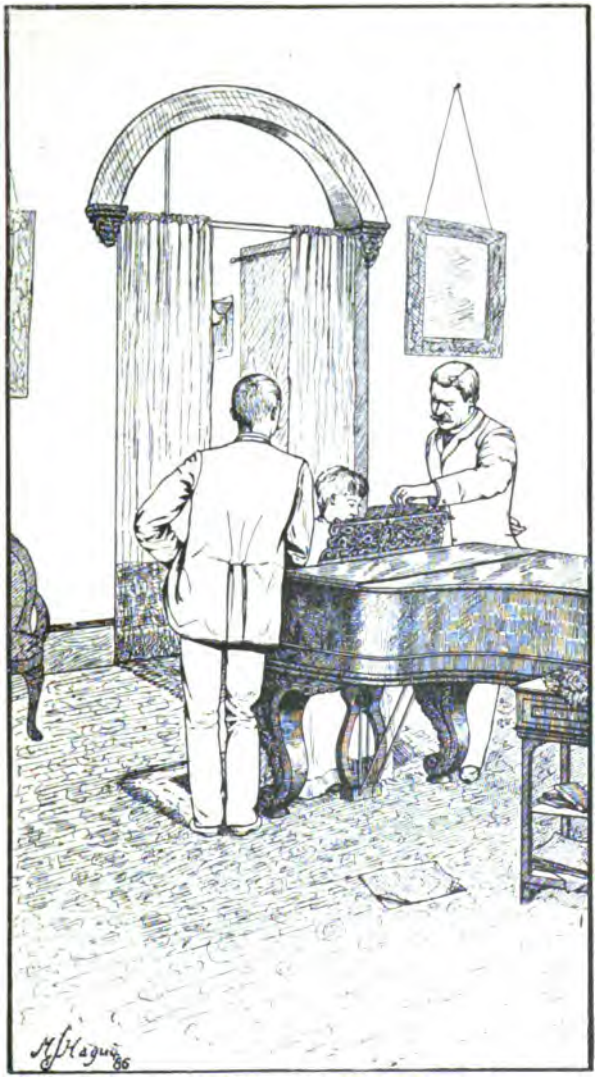
tions were interrupted by her husband saying: "That young fellow Strasmore is a fine young man."

"Yes, he is—what a splendid bass voice he has."

"He has a noble soul, too. I do not blame Guy for forming his friendship, for if I am not very much mistaken he is a young man who will make his mark in the world."

The songs were finished for the present, and Guy proposed, as the evening was so pleasant, that they take a stroll about the old place which he had not seen for months. William, who amid so much kindness could feel strange no longer, consented, and in a few minutes they were all three walking down the lawn with guileless Pauline between them, talking as merrily to Mr. Strasmore as if they had been the warmest of friends from childhood. They wandered through the grove which was the mocking bird's home, and every tree had its private history, which Pauline recounted in her charming, child-like manner. Some of those trees were grown hoary with age, and their massive trunks had become gnarled, having a weird appearance in the dull gray twilight.

Mr. Strasmore was shown the laughing streamlet fed by the spring, and the clear dimpled waters seemed just as shy, just as youthful as when Guy and Pauline were children.



THE SONG.

"I love thee, I love thee, pass under the rod."—See page 31.

"You see those streets and houses over there" said Guy pointing to where the town had encroached upon them, hemming in the old homestead like a beleaguered army, "that used to be our cow pasture. There Spot, Brindle, Rose and Whiteface used to feed, and always waited for Pauline and myself with Carlo to come and drive them home. I can remember how they would come lowing home as if very anxious to get to the milking pen, though they had made no effort to reach it until we had started them. Spot who wore the 'big bell' always went before, clanging it from side to side as she halted to nip the grass by the way."

"No cows feed there now," said William.

"No," and both Guy and Pauline sighed.

"It speaks of the improvement and advancement of the time that they do not," said William hopefully.

"Also of the changes of time," answered Pauline, her sweet voice almost pathetic. "The pasture is gone and so are Spot, Brindle, Rose and Whiteface, and brother and I dug Carlo's grave and watered it with our tears years ago."

"If you have attended no sadder funerals than those, Miss Denesmore" said William, "you have been very fortunate."

"We have been greatly blessed, Mr. Strasmore, and it is silly for us to repine because there is no longer a pasture, or cows for us to drive home,

or a Carlo to romp with us. But in that pasture I had my first adventure," said Pauline.

"What was it?" asked Mr. Strasmore, hoping she would tell him, because he liked the music of her voice more than any story she might tell.

"I went alone one evening with Carlo after the cows, and saw the first intoxicated man I ever saw in my life. It was father's hired man, Jack. He was coming down the lane from the village with a wagon, and seeing me he let the team go home just as they pleased, and staggered across the field to where I was driving home the cows, he said to help. He seemed so queer, staggering and reeling as he walked, and his face was so red that he frightened me almost out of my wits; but good, faithful Carlo would not let him come near me.

" 'Confound the dog, he's drunk and thinks I am,' said Jack, when he found that faithful Carlo would not let him approach me. I could not understand what made mother so grave next morning, or why Jack was so ashamed of his conduct. In a short time the act was repeated, and then mother told him of the ruin it would soon bring to his soul as well as body. Poor Jack looked very much mortified as he replied: 'I know it, Mrs. Denesmore, and I have tried and tried to quit it, but I cannot; my father before me was a drunkard, and as long as the temptation is set before me I can't resist it.'

He went from bad to worse until father discharged him, and I remember his words as if they were his dying utterances coming up from the gutter. 'This is all one need expect from a drunkard's son, my father filled a drunkard's grave, and I guess I will follow him sooner or later."

The moon had risen, giving forth a flood of silver light. As Pauline finished she glanced at William's face and found it very pale. Was he ill, or had something she said strangely affected him.

Guy who had a happy faculty of changing topics at the right time, now came in with something more entertaining, and strove to engross the attention of both William and Pauline, until their return. But some strange spell seemed to have come over William Strasmore.

Alone in his room he sat by his bedside and murmured, " 'All that could be expected of a drunkard's son—his father filled a drunkard's grave, and he must follow in his footsteps.' Heaven forbid! Am I safe? No. Oh, why cannot all who know this curse feel as I do! Eternal vigilance is the price of safety to those over whom the curse of an inherited appetite hangs. There is but one hope of safety and that is in the arms of the blessed Master. While the temptation is constantly before men whose morbid appetites crave drink, what more can be expected than that they will fall.

"If all men could see the dangerous precipice on which they stand, we might soon expect the curse of intemperance to be wiped out from our land; but alas, all—all are blind. "I will take care of myself and let others do the same; I am not my brother's keeper!" is too much the principle by which this selfish world is controlled. Then again there are many people like the Denesmores, who if they see a fellow-being on the road to ruin, will try to stay his course, or if in the gutter will endeavor to lift him up and make him purer and better, to fit him for usefulness in this world and for eternity, but they never make an effort to entirely remove the destroying demon from the land.

"The Christian people and temperance missionaries have worked as a man would who, standing on the bank of a swollen stream, rescuing only an occasional one of the thousands who are floating down the stream before him; he works hard to save as many as he can, and never looks up-stream to see how these people got into the stream to be drowned. By and by the thought occurs to him, 'Something is wrong. I'll go up along the shore and see how these people get into this river.' He does not proceed far till he finds a man shoving people into the stream. He takes a club and knocks him over, and then the stream is cleared of drowning men. These drowning men are the drunkards, and the man who

throws them in is the saloon-keeper, and the club I would strike him with is prohibition. I'd prohibit his business. To license it is to license that which leads to the death of thousands; hence, is only one degree removed from licensing murder."

William Strasmore was a pronounced prohibitionist. He realized that no one was safe while the deadly monster was alive and roaming at will through the land. He had urged his views so enthusiastically on Guy that he smiled and told him not to become a fanatic. Guy thought he was safe. He had no acquired or inherited appetite. It is usually the men with acquired or inherited appetites who make the strongest temance workers. They know their own danger and appeal with all the energy of earnest souls to the world for relief. To you who think you are safe, for the love of humanity do not turn a deaf ear to their appeal.

Pauline, having noticed the look of ashen hue on the face of her brother's friend, was alone in her room wondering what had caused it.

"Was it something I said about Jack being drunk?" she asked herself. "If I was sure I had wounded his feelings I would go and ask his pardon—but no, I did not, it is nonsense to think so."

Some how she felt wretched. To admit the truth, Pauline had grown to like the handsome young stranger just the least bit, and while her

tender heart would not have given any one pain, she would not have offended Mr. Strasmore for anything. "He surely has pronounced views on the liquor question," she said to herself, "but what are they?" Her brother must know and on the morrow she would ask him. Accordingly, as soon as she was alone with Guy, she asked: "Do you know what Mr. Strasmore's views are in regard to temperance?"

"He is prohibition to the core," was the answer; and Pauline heaved a sigh of relief.

CHAPTER IV.

HOME PLEASURES—THE DEPARTURE.

"Go! fair example of untainted youth,
Of modest wisdom, and pacified truth,
Just of thy word, in every thought sincere,
Who knew no wish but what the world might bear."

Pope.

THE vacation passed pleasantly to the young folks at the Denesmore house.

There were social gatherings, select parties, picnics, boating and fishing excursions, to engage their attention and make the time pass rapidly. In truth, it passed too rapidly, for before they hardly thought the vacation commenced, it was almost gone. Days had unconsciously glided into weeks, and the delightful summer was gone. Three days more and the young men will leave Staunton for college.

A slight shadow has come over the household as the time of their departure draws near. At breakfast there is a lull in the conversation, and even the usually bright Pauline seems sad and gloomy. The pleasure of planning new excursions and new pastimes is gone, and henceforth the only preparation will be the sad

one for separation. Guy Denesmore, noticing his sister's dejected manner, said:

"Well, Pauline, what is the order of the day?"

"We have an invitation to dine with the Days," she answered with an arch glance at her brother. "I thought that would be the last thing you would forget. Is it possible Maria is so little in your mind, or are you afraid Mr. Strasmore will win her affections from you?"

Guy winced and said something about girls always forming erroneous conclusions, and finally asked:

"What are we to do with ourselves until that time?"

"Dispose of yourselves as will be most agreeable to yourselves."

"I want to have a business talk with you two young men," said Mr. Denesmore gravely. "We have had considerable pleasure; now let us have some talk on business."

William Strasmore was not a little astonished, and Pauline with a laugh said:

"Now, young men, be prepared for something awful. I don't understand it, and don't want to, but you'll hear of margins, dividends, stocks, bonds, mortgages, and all that interests commercial people. I'm not commercial."

If William Strasmore was astounded when

Mr. Denesmore announced his desire for a business interview with him, he was still more astounded when they arrived at the office of that gentleman and he began to question William as to his future business intentions.

Strasmore's plans were not matured. He intended to complete his professional course, and then settle in some thriving Western town and engage in the practice of law.

"You have chosen no locality, have you?"

"No, sir; that will be easily enough done after I have completed my studies and have the right to hang out my attorney's shingle."

"I do not know that you could do better than to locate in Staunton," said the merchant, after a few moment's reflection. "I know one firm of old lawyers who I think would like to inject new life and younger blood into their business, and when your course of studies is complete, if you think such an arrangement would be agreeable to you, I will try to secure you a place in the firm."

"This kindness is very unexpected from a stranger, Mr. Denesmore, and I assure you I shall feel very grateful to you."

"Do not call me a stranger, William. You are Guy's friend, and whoever is the friend of my son is my own friend. Besides, I propose doing no more than I would want done for my own son under like circumstances. The posi-

tion you may secure in the firm may not be the most favorable and not as lucrative as you would like; but you can grow up to a better position, and it will be much better than no start."

In company with William Strasmore, Mr. Denesmore visited the Shaw Brothers, where the matter was mentioned, and though no plans for the future could be laid, the old lawyers seemed to think, when the proper time came, that business arrangements could be made with Mr. Strasmore.

Evening came and found William, Pauline and Guy at the Day mansion. Never did Maria Day look more beautiful than when Guy led her to the piano, where she for an hour charmed her audience with her matchless skill. The evil passions and selfishness lurking within the beauty did not come to view in the presence of Guy Denesmore. Her dark eyes sparkled with a brilliancy which seemed to rival the diamonds at her fair throat. She was most exquisitely attired in white tulle over satin, with corsage of satin, and ornaments of diamonds and pearls, and her cheeks flushed with pleasure when Guy was at her side, as if to rival the rose in her hair.

The contrast presented to the mind of William Strasmore by the two young ladies was not so much one of outward adornment,—for, in taste and skill in dress, Pauline was the equal of the

elegant Maria Day,—but it was in their whole tone and manner.

Maria's heartless flippancy was in higher favor with the butterflies of fashion, but Pauline's moral earnestness and intellectual style of beauty were more enticing to men of brains —a beauty of soul that will endure through maidenhood, womanhood, old age and eternity. William Strasmore was a sensible young man, and his mental comparison of the young ladies resulted favorably to Pauline. During the evening they found themselves alone in the elegant conservatory on which Mr. Day prided himself so much.

They were sitting amid flowering shrubs and gorgeous-hued plants, when Pauline, with just the least tinge of sadness in her voice, said:

"In less than a week you will be far from here, and amid quite different scenes from this" —then added, with a sigh, "I am so glad you and brother will be near each other. You cannot get lonesome."

"My visit to Staunton has been the happiest period of my life," said William enthusiastically. "Thanks,to your father and his family, seem too commonplace to offer for such enjoyment."

"We hope we shall be honored again with your presence in the near future," Pauline returned, after a moment's hesitation, a slight tint coming to her face. At this moment the

face of Ernest Day might have been seen glaring at them from behind a green bower of plants and flowering shrubs. His face was distorted with only such evil passions as jealousy can produce. But he was behind William and Pauline, and of course was not seen. After glaring for a few moments, like a tiger, he crept away to nurse his wrath, a complete prey to the green-eyed monster.

"I have about made arrangements to make Staunton my future home," said William, while the jealous Ernest Day was still gazing at them. "If I do, I hope we will come to know each other better. In the meanwhile, I have gained your father's permission to ask you for a friendly correspondence while we shall be separated."

The blush tints deepened on Pauline's cheeks as she answered:

"I shall be very glad to hear from you, and will—will answer promptly."

She spoke so candidly and sincerely that she made a far more vivid impression on William Strasmore than if her answer had been the bashful, hesitating response of a coquette. Pauline felt very grateful to her father for interesting himself in her brother's friend. William Strasmore's open, manly heart had won the confidence and esteem of the entire family.

The evening passed pleasantly to all but

Ernest Day. Finding himself supplanted by this young upstart, as he called the student, he roamed about the house sullen and gloomy, and was really glad when the company took their leave. Maria had been too happy with her lover to notice the gloomy discontent of her brother. When she had bowed the last guest out she returned to where Ernest lay on the sofa, silently cursing his fate.

"What a splendid evening this has been!" she said.

"Yes, splendid for you—you look splendid."

"So I have been told."

"Don't talk to me."

"Why?"

"I've had the d—l's own luck."

"What do you mean?" asked the sister.

"Yes, you are so wrapped up in selfishness you never care how I come on."

"I don't understand you, Ernest."

"Always the way. You are so wrapt up in your own affairs you never think of me."

"I don't understand you," repeated Maria, considerably provoked at the tantalizing manner of her brother.

"You don't? Don't you know I always thought I had a right to Pauline? and didn't you see that milk-sop, that doughface Strasmore engaging her attention all the time?"

"But he leaves soon, and then you will have

the field all to yourself," said Maria encouragingly.

"Yes, but he does not go soon enough."

"Why?"

"He has arranged to keep up a correspondence with her all the time he will be absent, and by the time he returns the courtship will be over and betrothal complete."

"You are out of sorts to-night, brother; let me send for some wine—that always quiets your nerves."

"Brandy would do better, but as you want wine send for it."

The wine was brought, and while Maria filled the glasses, she informed her brother that she and Guy were getting along splendidly, and though he would be absent from her, she was to hear from him at least once a week during his absence.

"Why didn't you offer your guests some of this kind of refreshment, Maria," asked Ernest, holding up his glass of wine to admire the rich color by gaslight.

"Guy told me not to, and I thought it best to obey his request for the present."

"That's new, is it not? Though he never indulges, I never knew him to forbid its use before."

"The chief objection is on Mr. Strasmore's account. Guy says he is so sensitive about the

use of intoxicating liquors, that he would be offended if they were offered to him in any form."

"Just like the fool I took him to be. I wish I had known it. I would have offered him brandy instead of wine."

"And received a lecture in return?"

"Then I would have passed the hat and taken up a collection for him—insisted on his starting a camp-meeting, you know."

"Guy says he talks better on temperance than any lecturer he ever heard."

"Let him come again, and I will give him abundant opportunity to lecture me."

"Surely you would not offend Guy, Ernest?"

"Give me a chance and see. He need not let that fellow make such a fool of him as that."

Ernest Day was in no enviable mood, and Maria left him alone and retired to her own room to rejoice alone.

CHAPTER V.

THE PICNIC.

**"On morning wings how active springs the mind
That leaves the load of yesterday behind."**

MARIA could no longer accuse her brother of being negligent in his attentions to Pauline Denesmore. When William and Guy were gone, he became all attention to her, and being genteel and refined when he chose, made himself quite an agreeable companion. Sin is not always coarse and repulsive, for Satan can mask himself in any guise. Do not think all villains are rough and uncouth; far from it. They are as apt to appear like gentlemen as like vagabonds.

Everybody was astonished to find Ernest Day becoming a regular church-goer. He even became a member of the Sabbath School and took a deep interest in its prosperity. Pauline, as well as others, noticed this great change, and rejoiced at it, as the good always rejoice over the return of a sinner, and openly encouraged him in every possible way she could. Being of a religious temperament, and having had the best religious training, she was always ready to

welcome any new convert to her Master's cause. Her friendly hand and re-assuring smile had brought more than one timid child into the Sabbath School. There was very little selfishness in Pauline's nature, and she seemed the essence of purity. She labored ardently in her Master's cause, and was as nearly perfect as it is possible for the sinful mortals of this world to be.

"Why cannot all do right for right's sake?" she frequently inquired of herself. "It is so much more pleasant to do right than wrong, and yet blind, erring mortals will imagine that by doing wrong they can increase the measure of their own happiness."

Did she stop at that moment to ask herself if Ernest Day's conversion was doing right for right's sake? Perhaps not, for Pauline was not one to judge another harshly. Her joys and hopes were all centered in enabling others, as far as lay in her power, to come into the full knowledge of the blessed truth and happiness which she enjoyed.

The Sabbath School decided to give an excursion and picnic for the children at a beautiful grove a few miles down the river. They were to take the train to the steamboat landing, and thence by steamer until they reached the picnic ground, and return in the evening by another boat. What child's cheeks do

not redden and eyes brighten at the prospect of a picnic? How welcome the woods in all their beauty, the swings and hammocks, the frolics on the grass or among the mossy trunks of old trees that have stood for ages! Parents, too, renew their youth by joining in these healthful sports with their children.

Older people seem to find enjoyment in the pleasure they provide for the children, and the toil and hardship of the preparation are forgotten. A picnic is a pleasure that will live in the memory of childhood long after other events have faded into oblivion.

Ernest made himself indispensable in the preparations, and during the excursion many wondered why one so useful had always kept himself aloof from such work. He should never fall into the background again if they could help it.

The long-expected day came, clear and bright. The sky was almost cloudless, only a few fleecy fragments floating amid heaven, forced along by a gentle breeze. The dewdrops sparkled like diamonds on the clover leaves, and flowers were blooming everywhere. Children were all on hand with bright, happy faces, each in full anticipation of a day of happiness. It was so pleasant to get away from the hot, dusty town and spend a day in the delightful, cooling shade.

The train was crowded with gay, prattling

children, and sped away from the town to the steamboat landing. There a large steamer, the "Belle Knapp," was waiting at the landing for them. The gang-plank was thrown out, and in double file the boys and girls marched aboard after their respective teachers.

"I have no class to conduct to-day, Pauline," said Ernest, with a smile, which he intended to be amiable; "let me share your duties and anxieties."

"Of course, Mr. Day, with pleasure."

He walked aboard at her side, and many thought they made a very handsome couple, as they marched at the head of Pauline's class.

All were aboard, and the boat, with her precious freight, steamed down the river. Soon the rocks pressed the banks on either side, forming a great stone wall to hold the waters in. The bluffs rose so high they seemed to kiss the heavens, with occasional breaks, where noisy little streams, like children just let out from school, burst forth into the great river. Two of these laughing streamlets came rippling down their narrow channels, gay and joyous, like twin sisters joining hand in hand, babbling and laughing on until they reach the great, silent, majestic river, whose current they go to swell. 'Tis so in childhood; we go laughing on until we reach the majestic

waters of mature age, and all gayety seems suddenly to have become silenced by deeper thought or more quiet enjoyment.

Trees could be seen on the crest of the bluff high above them, asserting their right to existence and beauty above the majestic river. They stood so high in the air that their gnarled, knotted trunks seemed but tiny things. Large birds could be seen soaring about them, and on the topmost branches of one an eagle alighted. The children saw the birds, and wondered if their heads did not grow dizzy at such a height. But the recollection that cool, inviting shades awaited them farther down the river, drove all else out of their mind. There was no boy adventurous enough to wish to scale that cliff.

Passing beyond those tall walls the river widened, and the bluffs on either side became broken and irregular, forming a mass of rocky hills and deep ravines, sometimes assuming grotesque shapes and presenting a picturesque scene. They passed an island where some fishermen had kindled a fire—the blue smoke ascending in billows and losing itself in space. The boats of the fishermen could be seen lying on the sand, and the fishermen themselves could be seen sitting near the camp-fire, smoking pipes. Further on they came to fields of grain. Some was cut and in the stack, awaiting the threshing machine, and across one field could be heard the din of the

machine, and the cloud of dust could be seen hovering over the scene, through which could be caught glimpses of the workmen.

Farther on are neat farm buildings, the farmers busy at work, heedless of the magnificent steamer which ploughs the water in her course. Then farther on the scene changes to green pastures, with sober cows and frolicsome calves and playful colts, for whom days of labor had not dawned. The colts became alarmed at the puffing monster on the river, and gazing at it a moment in startled terror, wheeled about with snorts of fear, which put the calves to flight, despite the assuring "moo's" of the dams, and scampered over the hill out of sight.

Pauline gathered the children together, and their sweet voices were soon mingled in songs of praise to Him who gives us all good gifts.

"Let our hearts be always cheerful
Why should sorrow enter there,
When our kind and loving Father
Makes us children of His care.

Always cheerful, always happy, Sunshine all about we see,
Full of beauty our path of duty, Cheerful we should ever be.

"When we turn aside from duty
Comes the pain of doing wrong,
And a shadow creeping o'er us
Checks the rapture of our song."

Many a rough boatman who had not heard the voices of children in praise for years listened at-

tentively to the song and heaved a sigh for the days when he was young and sinless as these children.

The day at the grove was spent as picnics usually are, in innocent open air amusements, and the children were heartily tired when the boat came to take them back up the river.

All are once more aboard, steaming up the river. The children are running about the deck and the older people are gathered about in groups chatting pleasantly. Ernest Day and Pauline sit apart from the others, and his fine face glows with pride while his low, gentle voice begins to breathe in her ear a story old but ever new.

A shriek interrupts him and startles every one on board that boat.

"Oh God, my child—my child! overboard."

It was an appealing cry answered by the shrieks of hundreds of others, and a rush was made to the steamer's side. Freddie Stevens was discovered struggling in the waters, as he was borne down the current.

CHAPTER VI.

RUM DID NOT DO THIS! SOME OF ITS WORK.

"But thou, false guardian of a charge so good,
Thou mean deserter of thy brother's blood!
See on these ruby lips the trembling breath,
Those cheeks now fading at the blast of death."

—*Pope.*

LIKE a flash Ernest Day's coat was thrown aside and plunging into the turbid waters he was swimming toward the sinking child before any one could recover from the shock the accident had produced. Every eye aboard that boat watched the strong, bold swimmer, and from every heart there ascended a prayer to Heaven. The mother was insensible and her friends were making fruitless efforts to restore her.

When the first feeling of horror and consternation had passed, cheer after cheer went up to encourage Ernest Day in his noble effort. He was as brave as a lion, and, although he shared the family selfishness, we find him engaged in a generous act. If the heart of Ernest Day could have been read aright, those beholders who so loudly applauded his bravery, would have read nothing but selfishness there. He rejoiced that

the accident had given him an opportunity to display his courage and skill before so many people. The newspapers would be full of the rescue, and he would be quite a hero. It might also help him in securing Miss Denesmore's heart and hand.

Ernest was a strong, bold swimmer and reached the child just as he was going down a second time, and winding one arm about him managed to keep his head above water until a boat, which had been immediately lowered, could pull to them. The great paddle wheels had been stopped and the steamer drove slowly forward from the force of the headway she had gained, which gradually grew less until it floated quietly down the stream. All Ernest had to do was to ride the waves beat up by the ponderous paddles and keep himself and the child afloat until the boat came along side, and they were lifted into it.

"The child is safe," cried Ernest Day from the boat where he held the dripping form of Freddie Stevens who was rapidly regaining his consciousness.

A shout—a wild cheer went up from the deck of the boat which even aroused the dull senses of that swooning mother. She was told again and again that her child was safe, and beyond a doubt it helped to restore her to consciousness. Rescuer and rescued were lifted to the deck, and

the child, more frightened than hurt, hastened to his mother. After allowing his well soaked clothes to drip, Ernest donned a coat the captain furnished him and started to find Pauline, to receive her praise for his courage and skill. At this moment his young brother Mark came up and in his usual impulsive manner said:

"Ern., you did nobly, but you may thank Pauline Denesmore that you didn't have a dram ahead, and drown both yourself and Freddie Stevens."

"Hush, Mark!" said Ernest, considerably embarrassed.

"Oh, you needn't say hush, I know what I am talking about. You know when father asked you to drink this morning, you refused, for fear the ladies would smell it on your breath. Father said there might be an accident and you would need something to strengthen your nerves; but you saved Freddie any way and rum did not do it. I wonder what father will think about it;—any way rum did not do it."

"Shut up, you little chatter-box," cried Ernest Day, feeling inclined to slap his brother, more especially when he discovered that Miss Denesmore had been near enough to hear every word he said. "Miss Denesmore, pay no attention to this boy, he is incorrigible," said Ernest to Pauline, by way of apology.

"You know it's so, Ern," cried Mark as he

started away to another part of the boat. "If you had taken one dram you'd a wanted more, and you're such an infernal lubber when yon are full, you'd a gone down certain—"

Ernest could stand this no longer. He started in pursuit of his mischievous brother, but Mark had quickly disappeared in the crowd, and turning to Pauline, whose face bore a look of mingled pleasure and pain, he said:

"Pay no attention to what that chattering boy says, Miss Denesmore—you surely know Mark."

The congratulations and words of praise Pauline had for the rescuer of little Freddie Stevens died on her lips.

When she reached home that evening and had related the incidents of the day, she told what she had heard Mark say to his brother. "Mother, can it be possible that any father will urge his son to do a thing which may destroy his soul as well as his body?"

"It is possible, Pauline. There are whiskey fanatics as well as temperance fanatics. There are strange people in the world, Pauline. Parents do encourage their children in wickedness. Mr. Day has been a determined opponent of churches and temperance reforms, and has gone to an opposite extreme, as he says, to keep these fanatics level."

"What will he think when Mark tells him rum did not do this?"

"He will probably say rum did not prevent it, and make Mark take a drink of it to show that the temperance reformer in his household is no better than the others."

"Oh, mother—make Mark drink?"

"Yes, my dear, perhaps pour it down him, men have done so. Nothing so rejoices the enemies of temperance as to see one of those professing its cause, fall: it proves how impracticable temperance is."

"Such a parent—his child should be taken away from him."

"That is impossible, Pauline. Mr. Day is a wealthy, powerful man, and society and the law uphold him."

"If Ernest were only free from the evils of intemperance he would make a noble man, and I shall do all in my power to save him."

"Do, my dear," said her mother.

In the meanwhile Mark Day had reached his home, and in his noisy, blustering way burst into the sitting-room where his mother and sister were sitting and began:

"There's been a regular catastrophe," and throwing his hat on the floor placed himself on the sofa.

"What was it?" both Maria and his mother asked.

"Humph! don't you wish you had gone," said Mark in his usual tantalizing way. "Sun-

day-school picnics are not so bad after all when they kick up such a lively racket as we had to-day."

"I don't believe it was anything at all," cried Maria petulantly.

"You don't—well, you'd a died if you'd a been there, or fainted any way if some young fellow'd been by to catch you in his arms. You could have had a nice time, for Mr. Smith was along, and he'll soon be looking about for some body to take care of his flock of children for his wife is about dead with consumption."

"Shut up, Mark."

"Oh, don't try to shut up a boy when he's just got on a good head of steam, you know a boiler might burst or something happen. Say, Maria, how would you like to be stepmother to half a dozen children."

"Leave the room—you are odious," cried Maria, "you are hateful, you unnerve me."

"Don't get worried sis, it spoils your beauty. There's crow's feet under your eyes, and I don't know even now whether you can get Smith or not."

"Mark—leave the room until you can behave yourself and say what you have got to say," said Mrs. Day.

"All right, mother, it shall not be said that I am a disobedient son; but as people should retain their worldly possessions, I'll take my hat and

give you and Maria a chance to cool off, then I'll come in and tell you all about it." Stooping, he took his hat from the floor and went out into the hall, where a moment later he could be heard singing:

"If invited to drink should I sternly say no,
Or should I comply to show my good nature;
And if I partake—how far should I go,
How much and how oft must I take of the creature.
But whether is rum, gin or brandy the best,
As each has the spirit to make a boy frisky,
And yet all the liquors when put to the test,
Could never compare with a drop of good whiskey."

"But whiskey too often produces its fools,
And sullies the fame of our nation,
Drug stores and saloons have been the cursed schools,
Where villains have finished their vice education.
And so after all I'm beginning to think,
That if we could soberly look at the matter,
We'd denounce and protest against drunk making drink,
And try the effects of pure thirst-quenching water."

Having tantalized his mother and sister to his own satisfaction, for Mark knew "they were dying to know what had happened," he re-entered the room and told them of the accident, how Ernest had rescued the drowning child.

"Yes, Ern did nobly," said Mark, "I felt proud of him when every body was calling him a hero. But who do you think deserves the praise, he or Pauline?"

"Pauline? What did she have to do with rescuing the child?" asked his mother.

"More'n you suspect, mother. You see, Ern would'nt drink this morning, for fear Pauline would smell his breath, and you know Ern. If he had taken one dram, he'd not stopped short of six, and would have been so stupified that he could'nt have saved Freddie at all. I heard many say there wasn't another man aboard the boat that could have done it. It took all his strength and a clear head to prevent there being a first class funeral or two. I tell you I was so proud of Ern that I reminded him it wasn't rum that did it."

"Oh, Mark, you are so foolish," cried Maria, impatiently. "That made no difference. Pauline keep him from taking his morning dram? Well, not much, I guess. He did not drink because he did not want to—that's all."

"You can just bet you're mistaken," said Mark, with a toss of his head and shrug of his shoulders. "Ern thinks a sight of Pauline, and while he's pretending to be so pious and all that, to get her, he's not going to let her smell liquor on his breath. He knows his cake will be dough whenever he does that. But there's no use to talk with ma and Maria when their heads are set," and with this philosophical conclusion he donned his hat and once more left the room.

Ernest Day did not make his appearance at his home that night, but that was nothing unusual for him. His mother would very much have

liked to see him, for with all her weak selfishness she was proud of her son. She sat up until twelve o'clock waiting for him, and then, as he did not come, she went to bed.

When Ernest reached the depot on his return, his brain was in a whirl. He went to the house of a friend and changed his clothes for a dry suit which he purchased in the town, and sat down a moment in deep meditation. Oh, Pauline, if you could have read that dark heart on the night you were praising Ernest Day's valor, your sleep would not have been so sweet. It was full of scheming, treachery and danger.

"I must do it, and I will commence to-night," he said at last, starting up. "I can put a lock on her mouth and then throw the key away." He hurried out into the street, bent on some mission which boded some one no good.

A few moments later he was seated in Joe Hammond's restaurant. Opposite him was a youth, a few years his junior. The refreshments were untasted at their side, and they were engaged in an earnest conversation.

"I tell you, George, there is no need to be a stickler for duty. It's all well enough to look after affairs when your father is incapable of doing it himself. I respect you for the regard you have for your mother and sister; but it is too much of a sacrifice."

"Don't talk about this being a sacrifice," said

George warmly. "Every one in this life has his peculiar duty to perform. By strong endeavor the most irksome duty may become a pleasure. This is a sacred duty. Were I to forsake my pale-faced, heart-broken mother and throw all this responsibility on my sister Deena, who now has more than she can bear, I would not be worthy the name of son or brother. You once professed to love my sister, now how can you advise such a course. Are you a villain and do you want to ruin us all?"

George Hammond spoke hotly and for a moment Ernest Day's face flushed with anger. He sat plucking his moustache while he allowed his passion to cool, then he replied:

"I would not take such from another, George, but I am a friend of yours and only have your good in view. I once did love your sister, but as was predicted it only proved a short-lived, boyish passion. While I respect her highly, we are only friends. But you are too talented to remain bound down in a small restaurant acting in your father's place. Prof. Kirke says he secured you a desirable position as book-keeper in a wholesale establishment, but you refused it. He was disappointed in his student treating his overtures and offers of kindness with such contempt."

"I ought to have explained matters to the Professor, but that is very difficult to do. To

you I can talk freely, as you have been here several times when father was almost unmanageable, and— it is not necessary for me to go into details. I must see Prof. Kirke and try to explain matters. I want to set myself right before my friends, and hope circumstances may so change in the future that I may be able to avail myself of their kind offers."

"No, George, I would not explain—it's not necessary. By your judicious management of affairs you can soon rise above all this, and when you have gained the place marked out for you by your friends, they will understand, and appreciate you the more because it was done by your own exertions. Proof is better than words. But why can't you attend to your father's affairs here, and at the same time work up some business of your own? What are your plans for the future?"

"We want to get out of debt, and then scrape together enough to go West. There, on a quiet farm, where father will be removed from these temptations, we have hope of his reformation. He will never reform here, where the temptation is constantly before him. Deena can teach Lillie, and if we are fifteen miles from our nearest neighbor, and seventy-five miles from a town, it will be that much the better."

"Your plan is a good one, George, and I hope

it may work. But, come—you have a few idle moments—let us take a stroll."

George Hammond consented. Better, far better, would it have been to have taken a stroll in the jungle, with a hungry tiger for his companion. Oh, will not some pitying angel whisper a word of warning to this unfortunate youth? Are you blind, George Hammond, that you do not see the look of fiendish triumph in Ernest Day's eyes as he leads you forth into the streets? The lamps light up the street below, and the moon throws a silver sheen on the roofs above them. George Hammond felt a restless longing at his heart for something higher, better and different. His conscience has never yet had occasion to upbraid him. It is a very tender conscience—not more calloused than an infant's hand, but goaded to madness it will rise and sit in condemning judgment over him.

During the long walk, the oily tongue of the wily schemer was gradually overcoming the scruples of his victim, and paving the way for his ruin. At length, they came to a halt in front of a brilliantly-lighted saloon. The soft strains of music came from within, and it was an easy matter to entice the youth to enter, just to see what was going on. Only the better classes were to be found here—it was one of those places where the devil prepares his kindling wood. Many people are in favor of a temperance law that will close up the "low dives"—the haunts of the abandoned

drunkards. It would be much better, if only one class of drinking places is to be prohibited, to strike out those gilded places where young men begin to drink in a respectable (?) way, and there form an appetite that soon passes them along down the line, to less and still less respectable places, till they reach the lowest outpost of satan.

The two young men sauntered, arm in arm, down the brilliant, gilded hall, stopping a moment here and there to watch a game of billiards, or cards. All the while Ernest kept up a lively conversation, in an off-hand manner, with the many acquaintances he met, frequently presenting his friend, "Mr. Hammond."

This small flattery began to tell on George Hammond, and before he hardly knew it, he was seated at a table, drinking champagne and playing cards. He was flattered to be among aristocratic people, and even ventured to put up money, in a small way, to be equal with the others. He won, and elated with success, he drank more, and doubled stakes, and won each time. Dawn was just appearing in the east when they emerged from that gilded *hell*.

"Be sure and meet me here again to-night, George," said Ernest anxiously. "I want you to give me an opportunity to win a part of this back." George promised, and turned his steps homeward, his brain in a whirl, and the whis-

pered words of satan's flattery in his ears. "You won, George," the demon said. "You are shrewder than the shrewdest; now go in, win more, get rich and live a merry life."

Ernest Day, perfectly sober, was walking in a different direction. His scheming mind was busy, and he was congratulating himself on his success. He drew his coat close about him, for the morning air was chilly, and began to soliloquize:

"So, George Hammond, you have been gambling. I wonder how your mother would like the expression, 'You are pinned to your mother no longer, but a fast young man of the world.' I despise such a fool as George Hammond, and such a fogy as Strasmore. I will make a cat's paw of the one, and the other may yet learn what it is to cross my path."

There was a look at that moment on the face of Ernest Day which would have frightened a timid person.

CHAPTER VII.

ONLY ELEVEN MONTHS.

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

—*Pope.*

"MIND your business. I'll go where I please, and do just as I please—hic. Guess I'm a free man ain't I?"

One could plainly see that the speaker was traveling at a break neck speed down the road to ruin. This is the wreck of the bright young man whom we saw, only eleven months ago, struggling, though vainly, with the tempter. Ernest Day's plan has succeeded well. Mark the change. The dark blue eyes are heavy, dull and bloodshot, the face red and bloated, and alcohol is cooking the brain. He wears a slouched hat and his person is neglected; his clothes are in tatters and he has the manner and airs of a vagabond about him. His weeping sister, between sobs, said:

"Oh! George—brother—why do you continue this downward course? Don't you see what the

end must be? Why can't you spend your evenings with us as you used to do. Our sorrow then was really very light compared with the present, for we had you to help us bear our burden."

"If there's anything I hate, it's a whining woman," said the inebriate youth.

For a moment Deena Hammond sobbed in silence and then said: "George, I do not believe it is you who abuse me, your heart is too good, too kind and gentle. It is the evil spirit which has entered in the form of alcohol. But promise me, brother, that you will stay with us to-night?"

"Mother's calling you, Deena."

"I cannot go, George, until you promise me not to leave to-night. If you had stayed with us on that fatal night, how much misery might have been spared us."

She stopped and he sat mute, and silently gazed on the floor. The feeble voice of her mother was again heard calling:

"Deena—Deena, please come!"

"Yes, mother,—promise me, George."

"Promise what?" he demanded savagely.

"That you will be here when I come back, and that you will stay with us to-night."

"Yes, I'll stay with you to-night," he answered desperately, evidently anxious to get rid of his sister.

Modenia, fixing her once bright, beautiful eye on the brother whom she still loved, despite his degradation and fallen condition, said:

"Oh, George, you will not tell me a falsehood will you? You will not deceive me?"

"D'ye think I've turned out to regular lyin'?" he asked in an angry manner.

Modenia feared to rouse the slumbering passions within his breast, and so said no more to him, but left the room. Alas! she had not realized that while the fiend alcohol can breed murder within the human heart, it can also transform the honest, truthful youth to a reckless liar. The mother's wants were soon supplied, and Modenia hastened back to where she had left her brother, to find the room vacant. She ran to the door and looked up and down the street, hoping to see her brother that she might run, call him back, and persuade him again to pass one night at home, away from the temptations that were plunging him into the abyss of ruin, but George could nowhere be seen. Wringing her hands in silent despair, this once beautiful girl sank down sorrowfully into a chair. She dared make no outcry, much as her natural impulse inclined her to do so. Her mother was very ill, and dared not add more to her grief. The bright eye was dulled with sorrow, the dimpled cheek pale and careworn. Will these dark clouds ever clear away, and will the sunlight of peace

and happiness ever beam forth again on her dark life?

While sitting bowed down with sorrow and shame, she was roused by a knock at the door. She started up and opened it. A small boy was there holding a sealed note in his hand.

"Is this Miss Hammond?" he asked.

"It is," was her answer.

"Mr. Day sent this and told me to wait for an answer," and he handed her the sealed note. With trembling hand she took the envelope, broke the seal and glanced at the contents. It was so brief that a single glance sufficed.

"DEENA

I have something important to communicate. When and where can I see you?

Yours, truly,

E. D."

With a pencil she wrote at the bottom of the page:

"At home. Come now.

D. H."

She folded this and gave it to the boy to return, and trembling with some terrible apprehension at her heart, she went into the faded little parlor to await the arrival of Ernest Day. She had not long to wait. His familiar rap which used to send a thrill of gladness to her heart, was heard at the door, and trembling and shuddering violently she admitted him. When Ernest Day

gazed upon that faded, blighted beauty, something like pity came to his hardened heart and he said:

"I am very sorry for you, Deena, and especially as what I have to say will increase rather than diminish your burden."

"What have you to say?" she asked, fixing her large, tearful eyes upon him.

Seating himself, and pressing his hand to his temple, as though he felt a pain there, he finally stammered:

"Your brother—he—has forged a note on me."

Modenia Hammond started up, and for a moment clung to the back of her chair for support. Could it be that her brother, whose honor had always been the pride of the family, had been guilty of a crime? But she remembered that the demon that had stolen away his sympathy and truthfulness, might have also taken his honor. Yet, knowing Ernest Day only as the destroyer of her happiness, she replied:

"I do not believe it. I will not believe it until I have better evidence than Ernest Day's word."

"All right, *Miss Hammond*, I am equal to the emergency." He then told her what had first led him to suspect George—that he had employed a detective, who was to be silent until he told him to make the charge. He then ex-

hibited papers corroborative of his accusation.

"Where is the detective?" asked Deena.

"If you wish to see him you can have that pleasure, for he is not far away."

"I want to see him."

He left her, saying he would return in a few moments, but it seemed an age before his hand turned the door knob, and he ushered in a stranger, wearing a detective's star on the lapel of his coat.

The detective was very considerate of her feelings in telling his story of her brother's disgrace, but every incident connected with the forgery was fully explained. He concluded with: "For the sake of his family Mr. Day does not want the misguided youth exposed. He says he can mete out a better punishment for him, and save the family the disgrace of a criminal prosecution."

The detective left them, and then Deena, turning to Ernest Day, said:

"It was for my sake you purchased the officer's silence. You think you can mete out a better punishment and save poor George and ourselves the disgrace of a criminal prosecution. If you are so thoughtful, why not have accomplished all this without coming to me at all?"

"I am only willing to keep silent on certain conditions," he answered in an undertone.

"What are they?"

"*Your own silence,*" he hissed between his set teeth, while the light of demons gleamed from his eyes. For a moment she was silent, and mustering up all her strength to meet his fiery determination, she said:

"While mother lives I will, for her sake, keep silent, but should I outlive her, I swear—"

"Stop, Deena," he cried, coming so close to her that she felt his hot, angry breath on her cheek. "Promise me to keep silent now and forever on that subject, or before to-morrow's sun shall set your brother will be in the iron grasp of the law, and then nothing can keep him from the penitentiary. Your solemn promise given now will save your brother and your family this blow, which would certainly result fatally on your sick mother. Now if you were to make matters public you could effect nothing, for I intend doing what I proposed, and I think you are sensible enough to understand that this is the only reasonable way out for us."

"You were the first who lead George astray," she returned, slowly and thoughtfully. "Now, I shall exact a promise of you—never to come near my brother again; never darken this threshold, but leave us alone to our misery."

"There is no honor in being the companion of George Hammond, and I gladly shake him off."

"Then I give you my promise of silence," she said reluctantly.

"Now and forever?"

"Now and forever," she repeated.

"I believe you will keep your word, Deena; now let us part as friends," said Ernest Day, extending his hand toward her.

She raised her reproachful eyes to his face and said: "Do you think I can endorse your villainy and give you the hand of friendship? No, sir! sooner would I touch a deadly serpent than your hand. Go now, and remember to insure my silence you must faithfully perform your part. Never speak with George or darken this door."

"Good-bye, Deena. I wish you felt differently toward me. Time will prove that I am right."

He was gone, and Deena Hammond felt that the last tie which bound her to earthly happiness was snapped. Burying her face in her hands she sobbed convulsively. A few months previous she would have found solace from her woes by appealing to her Heavenly Father for aid; but now all the fountains of Christian faith and hope were dried up, and she could not pray to a God whose very existence she doubted. The future was so dark, with nothing to hope for. An invalid mother, a drunken father and brother, and a young sister being reared in the worst

cesspool of iniquity in the whole city, made her cares more than she could bear. For months there had not been a ray of light. The night brought no refreshing sleep, and dawn failed to leave the toil of yesterday behind. Her load constantly increased. She had the cares of the present and past upon her.

Hour after hour she sat there in a painful reverie, and the midnight hour drew near. A weak, tottering step was heard, and she started up, to see her invalid mother in the door.

"Deena! why are you not in bed, my dear?" she asked anxiously; "are you sick?"

"No, mother, I am well."

"I awoke, called you, and you did not answer; then I went to your bed, and it was untouched. The gas was burning out here, and I came to see why it was not turned off, and found you sitting alone. I have been waiting so long, too, for your father, Deena; why don't he come?"

"I cannot answer that, mother, but I would like some one to tell me why we are so cursed as to be eternally wretched. George has become a sot, as well as father, and if we were all dead it would be better."

"Oh, Deena, do not talk that way, child. God has some purpose in having us live."

"I do not believe there is a God, mother," cried the girl almost fiercely. "If there is, He must be a cruel master. What have we done

that He should make us the sport of fiendish caprice?"

"Oh, Deena! Deena! do hush. I can't bear to have you talk so. This is only a trial, dear, that we may be all the brighter when we do come forth. Think of Job and take courage. Intemperance is one of our greatest evils, but heaven forbid that it should upset our faith and ruin the chances of future blessings."

"But oh, think of George, mother," cried the poor girl, wringing her hands in agony. "Only eleven months ago he was our main prop and stay—our hope, our all; and we thought if any one was on the sure foundation it was our own beloved George. Since he has become ensnared in the toils of the tempter, who is safe?"

"No one is safe while the unholy traffic is permitted. All are subjected to the temptation while these earthly hells are permitted to run in full blast in our land."

"Yet how many will hug *the worst foe* to their breasts and talk of liberty to do as they please, and let friends, bright prospects, a life of usefulness and happiness go, taking in their stead sin, shame and misery?"

"There will be an end to this some day, Deena," said Mrs. Hammond, with a hopeful sigh. "I still have hope that intemperance will be swept from the land. It may require many more martyrs like ourselves, but humanity

will in course of time revolt against the outrages and tyranny of king alcohol, and the voters will rise up in their might and put it down forever. It may not come in time to benefit us, for there must be many sacrifices before the nation will be roused to the reality of its danger. What, then, if we are made martyrs? Humanity will, in the end, be benefitted by it."

The slamming of a door at this moment put an end to their conversation. Was it the husband and father, or son and brother. Both asked the same question in a breath. It was George. He came into the room, his crushed hat well on the back of his head, his hair down on his forehead, and with a drunken giggle, as he staggered from side to side, began:

"He, he, he, Deena,—kept my word, didn't I?—hic. I told the boys I must come back, cos I'd promised—hic—my sister that I was goin' to stay at home—he, he, he. Always keep my word, don't—hic—care what happens, don't I Deena?"

He went on for some time in his drunken, idiotic manner, when his sister and mother finally got him to bed, where he almost immediately fell into a heavy, drunken slumber. Having disposed of the wreck of a few months, the invalid and her daughter sat down to wait for the wreck of years.

CHAPTER VIII.

REJECTED.

"Of all the causes which conspire to blind
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind,
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,
Is PRIDE, the never-failing vice of fools."

—*Pope.*

IT lacked but a month until Guy Denesmore and his friend William would return to Staunton. Pauline was counting the days, which seemed to drag by, so anxious had she grown. If one had asked her whose return would give her most pleasure, Guy's or Mr. Strasmore's, she of course would have answered that she was most eager to see her brother. Perhaps she thought she was, for her deceitful little heart would never admit, even to herself, how dear her brother's friend had become to her.

Mr. Denesmore was reading his evening paper and Pauline was engaged in some light needlework when the door-bell rang. She was about to answer it herself when she heard the footsteps of a servant girl going toward the door. She had almost forgotten the caller, so absorbed was she in her own thoughts, when the door opened

and the servant girl said Mr. Day was in the parlor waiting to see Miss Pauline.

Mr. Denesmore raised his eyes from the paper he was reading, glanced at Pauline through his glasses, and ascertaining who the visitor was, again resumed his reading. Pauline, supposing that Ernest Day had merely called in regard to some Sunday School arrangements was really glad to hear his arrival announced.

She found him more amiable than usual on this occasion, and he held her hand much longer than propriety or friendship required. They were soon sitting close together but by no means like lovers, chatting quite pleasantly. At times Pauline felt a repugnance to him and was half inclined to run away, but she summoned up all her courage and made herself as agreeable as she could. Ernest Day had reformed! Such was the rumor that went about over town. He had given up the social glass and all the wild and reckless pleasures, so called, which flow from it. Rumor also said that Pauline Denesmore had snatched him from destruction, and though she tried hard to give God the praise, she felt within her heart a little pride that she had been enabled to effect so much good.

The conversation was on Sunday schools, churches and societies, and in fact everything save that which bore most heavily on their minds.

The evening was delightful and Ernest proposed a stroll about the grounds.

"Your grounds are so delightful," said Ernest Day as they strolled forth from the house, Pauline's hand resting lightly on his arm. "I am always delighted to walk about in them."

"I could not endure a house without trees and brooks," said Pauline. "A great bare house with all it's pomp and splendor and nothing of God's handiwork is an unpleasant sight to me."

"Your tastes are exactly my own, Pauline. Father and Maria want nothing better than a costly mansion up town, where buildings are so thick, a blade of grass cannot find space to grow; but give me shady trees, waving meadows and running water every time."

They came to a rustic seat within the generous glow of the moonlight, and were soon seated. It would have been apparent to a close observer that Ernest Day was laboring under some embarrassment. On his cheeks came and went a scarlet hue, and at times he was thoughtful and absent minded; but Pauline's mind was so completely absorbed with the return of her brother and William Strasmore that she paid little attention to her companion, no more than courtesy demanded she should.

"Pauline," he at last said in such a husky, desperate voice that it startled her. There was an unintended fierceness about the sound which was

startling. Pauline trembled, she knew not why, but the very manner of the man portended evil. Ernest Day seemed to completely choke up for a few moments and then he began again: "Pauline, I have something to tell you and must speak of it now while I can. Don't think I am mad or out of my mind, for if I am it is but natural, perhaps, under these circumstances. I want you to believe me in earnest, for as Heaven is my witness I am. I love you, Pauline, and have ever since you were a child. I have been a wild boy, I know, but I have reformed, and with you as my companion throughout life, there would never be any danger of my feet slipping again. I love you devotedly, Pauline; will you—oh, will you—become my wife?"

Pauline sat mute and silent. Again and again had she tried to stop him before he said so much, but without avail. So unexpected was the declaration that her tongue seemed paralyzed. He waited patiently for her to speak, and she rose trembling to her feet. Ernest Day was sure he never saw a more beautiful picture than the lovely girl standing before him in the moonlight. After several minutes of silence, she began:

"Ernest Day, I am very sorry you have said so much. I assure you, it was so unexpected to me that I could hardly speak until now. I have always been a friend to you, and always will remain your friend, but I cannot be more;

it is useless for me to attempt to be more. I have watched you for the last twelve months and have rejoiced that your course of life is changed for the better. I have the highest regard for you but I can never be your wife—I do not love you as a wife should."

"You could in time learn to love me, Pauline."

"No, it's useless—"

"Oh, for Heaven's sake, Pauline, do not cast me aside without one ray of hope; you will blacken my existence."

"No—no, Ernest, don't say anything more about it, please don't!" cried the tender-hearted girl, "you will come to think of this differently, after awhile, and admit I was right. Find some other woman more suited and more worthy of yourself than I."

"There are none," he earnestly declared.

"Oh, yes, there are many. I am sorry you think as you do, but time, the healer of all wounds and the righter of all wrongs, will prove to you that I am right."

In vain were all his pleadings, even though he went down on his knees. She upbraided him for such folly and insisted that she must go to the house. When they came to part she extended her hand and said:

"Ernest, let us part as friends. I pity you more than you think, and I regret that this must

be as it is. I can be a very dear friend to you, but nothing more."

He tried to smile and appear unconcerned, but there was such a lurking devil in each eye that she shuddered and was glad when he was gone. She hastened to her room, and after a few moments painful thought about Ernest Day, fell to dreaming bright dreams in which William Strasmore was the central figure.

Ernest Day was, in the meanwhile, walking slowly down the street, his brow contracted with anger, and his scheming brain evolving desperate plans. He had not given up Pauline yet.

CHAPTER IX.

ESTABLISHED.

Offspring of Heaven and earth, and all earth's Lord,
That such an enemy we have who seeks our ruin,
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperse
The tempted with dishonor foul supposed,
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof against temptation.

—*Milton.*

A year and a half has come and gone, since Dr. Guy Denesmore established himself in the practice of his profession in his native town. His success has been greater than is usually the lot of young men just entering upon a professional career. His friend and college chum, William Strasmore, has also launched into his legal calling with bright prospects for the future.

The elder Denesmores are gliding smoothly down the stream of time, and not a troubled wave has yet risen to disturb the tranquility of their voyage, or shadow darkened their sky. Their children, the usual object of parental solicitude, have proven all their hearts could wish. The past has been so sweet that the future holds only bright promises for them. Little did they dream how dark that future would be. We can thank Heaven that the veil conceals the future.

How much pain and sorrow we escape by not being able to rend the veil.

Pauline Denesmore had almost forgotten the proposal of Ernest Day. The matter had never become known outside the Denesmore family. Ernest Day had gone back to his old habits and no longer refused the social glass. He was seen no more at church or Sabbath School, and those who had predicted that the reformation of the skeptic's son would be short-lived, now shook their heads knowingly and said:

"I told you so."

The Denesmores were still enthusiastic in doing the good work which came within their reach, but never thought of searching the highways for more important work. Not so with William Strasmore. He realized that life was real and earnest, and could not be appreciated or enjoyed without doing the divine will of the Master. He never forgot the command, to go into the hedges and by-ways and call people to God. He saw that in the midst of life we were in death. He had watched with trembling, the constant and increasing strength of "*The Worst Foe.*" He saw such a mass of humanity sailing on the sea of intemperance, many of them irresponsible beings struggling and calling for aid, that his soul was stirred within him. He remembered that father who had implored aid from the public and who had been treated with silent

contempt by the voters. There were all about him, and, dear reader, there are all about us to-day, thousands of unfortunate people who have inherited or acquired appetites for alcoholic stimulants which they can never overcome while the temptation glares at them from every corner of the street. They are always on the brink, on shifting sand, and, as their feet slip from under them they turn their hollow eyes upon us, and, in humanity's name, implore us for aid. But the voter shrugs his shoulders, casts his ballot, and prides himself on being safe and no fanatic either. William Strasmore realized, that while the evil of intemperance prevailed, all good efforts were only half blessed. He had once thought of subduing the evil, but observation had convinced him that such an evil was not safe even in a subdued state. The only way to be free was to stamp out the evil altogether; this could only be done by uniting the strong and the good against it.

He sat in his office thinking on the one great question which had almost completely taken possession of his being. He opened his desk and from a drawer took out a letter yellow with age. It was a very sacred document to him. No one save himself and the writer knew its contents, but on this evening he intended to place it in the hands of Pauline Denesmore, his betrothed, for her to read. It contained a family secret, but it had always been and ever would be his safeguard against temptation.

William was somewhat sad and downcast when he came to the home of his betrothed. But Pauline was bright and cheerful and made amends for his low spiritedness, and accounted for her lover's ennui by saying to herself that he had overworked himself. When they were quite to themselves in the pleasant old parlor, he took the time-stained letter from the breast pocket of his coat and said:

"Read that, Pauline; it will explain itself."

She unfolded the pages and read:

"WILLIAM, MY DARLING BOY:—

"Nature and my failing senses tell me that before long I shall leave you, my precious child—it may be to a long life in this world, so full of temptation. I yearn to take you with me to that world where sin cannot enter and night never comes; but it may be the will of our Heavenly Father that you remain behind to do some good work. Better so, if you can only be sufficiently forewarned against what I fear will be your greatest danger. Others would shrink from telling you what is so necessary for you to know early in life. *Your father was a drunkard.* If I could have remained with you, the pain of this knowledge would have been spared you, my precious child; but without the watchful care of one whom nature has ordained should love you best, you may not be warned of this inherited appetite until it is too late. Your father must be dead, as I have not heard of him since three months before your birth. He took his social glass before we were married, but

I always thought him strong enough to resist the temptation, if it should ever become a temptation. The habit grew on him until it was uncontrollable. We were both orphans, and to our own knowledge had no relations in America. Your father had a good position in a wholesale establishment, and I was teaching school at the time we were married. We lived very happily, for my husband was kind, and though he drank occasionally, I never dreamed that he would become an inebriate. When our baby, Minnie, was born I hoped she would induce him to break off the habit, which I discovered was gradually growing on him. But though he did make an effort to desist, it was only temporary. His old habit had gained too strong a hold upon him, and he tired of home, wife and child, and preferred the saloon and rum holes. Our baby only lived two years, and the angels called her home. Though I tried to turn his eyes toward the Pearly Gates which she had entered, it was all in vain. He kept going from bad to worse, until he lost his position, and then the misery of the months which followed is beyond description. I saw my husband going rapidly down the road to ruin, while I was powerless to save him. He tried to reform. Oh! he made such noble efforts to escape the demons, but the law permitted the monsters to stand on every corner of the street, ready to seize him. He could not go about his daily work without having the temptation flaunted in his face. At last I was forsaken—he had slipped away as completely as if he had gone to another sphere. I was

unable to pay the rent, and gave up our little cottage. I was in a despondent state, when the lady with whom I had lived before my marriage found me and took me home with her.

"Eight weeks after, you were born. When you were quite young I was stricken with a fever, from which I have never fully recovered. Before I was strong I secured a school several miles distant, against the wishes and advice of my friends, and taught nine long months, though my health seemed failing all the time. I saw the name of Strasmore mentioned in a paper published in a city a hundred and fifty miles away, and hoping it might be your father, I set out for the city. But when I reached the city I could not find my husband, though I inquired at all the prisons, at police headquarters, and hospitals. My money gave out, and I was forced to travel on foot, and beg my way to this district, where I secured the school and a temporary home with Mr. Johns, who has been so kind to me. I worked ardently at my school, but consumption had seized on my lungs, and after two months I was prostrated on this bed, from which I shall never rise. My dear Willie, you will have to go through the world alone, and your pathway will not be an easy one, but hearken to the voice of your dying mother: *be not tempted with strong drink.* It blighted the lives of your parents, and may likewise prove your ruin if you touch it. Blame not your father, but rather pity his weakness, and hate the monster that destroyed him. Touch not, taste not, and handle not. Avenge your father's death by making war on the

traffic and never cease to work until the curse is entirely banished. Be not satisfied with your own safety, but labor for the safety of others, and though you are called a fanatic, remember that it is your duty to fight the monster which brings the chief misery to mankind. Consecrate yourself to the temperance cause, my son; make it your life's work, and your life will not be spent amiss. Now, my darling child, I commit you to the care of our Heavenly Father and these kind friends, who have promised to care for you as if you were their own. Remember, as you pursue your lonely journey through life, that your mother awaits you on that other bright shore.

"Your loving mother, forever and ever,

"ANNIE STRASMORE."

Pauline's tender heart was touched, and the tears were coursing down her cheeks when she had finished reading the contents of the letter.

"Pauline," said William Strasmore, in a low, solemn voice, "I should have told you this before, but I had not the courage until now to lay bear this dark secret. You know all now; are you still willing to risk your life and happiness in my keeping?"

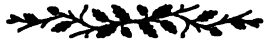
She threw her arms about his neck and cried: "Oh, Willie! Willie! I have no fears of you. You will never yield to intemperance, and I will help you avenge your murdered parents. We will, together, make war on alcohol, and devote our lives to the work."

"God bless you, Pauline; you inspire me with courage and determination. You are as brave, as trusting and noble as my own poor mother. Heaven grant that you may never be called upon to endure the trials she had to suffer."

"Tell me more of her, Willie. How long did she live after writing this letter?"

"About two weeks. The letter was kept by Mrs. Johns, and given me when I was fifteen years old. I know very little of my parents. I never knew my mother's maiden name, her birthplace, nor the date or place of her marriage. She told Mrs. Johns but little more than the letter contains, and never did she mention the names of the friends who had reared her from childhood, or who took care of her after she was abandoned by my father. So deeply sunk was she in despair that she forgot everything, and Mrs. Johns failed to make any inquiry of her or about her until it was too late."

They talked a long time, and planned out a temperance campaign which was to last all their lives. Both were young and hopeful, and both enthusiastic in the cause.



CHAPTER X.

A BOUQUET AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate
All but the page prescribed, their present state."

—*Pope.*

WE have now brought the various threads of our romance down to the time when Mark Day left his mother and sister so abruptly, determined, as he vowed, to tell Guy Denesmore every word of slander his sister had spoken against Pauline. Mark was so impulsive and determined, that had he found Dr. Denesmore in his office, there is no question but that he would have told him all, but the young doctor was out. After several moments spent in reflection, Mark began to question whether it was right, after all, for him to tell family secrets. He dared not go to his mother for advice on this critical subject, so he determined on the next best thing, which was to go and consult with his Sunday School teacher.

Pauline, who had ever been friendly with the Days, was warmly attached to Mark, who had for some time been a member of her Sunday School class. She always welcomed the lad

warmly when he came, and Mark had often confided his petty troubles to her, and she had never failed to give him good advice. She met Mark at the door and brought him to the sitting room where she was doing some light sewing.

"Miss Denesmore," Mark began after an awkward silence of a few moments, "D'ye think a boy ought to tell every thing he knows?"

"No, Mark it is not necessary to do that."

"Well s'pose a boy would overhear somebody talking about somebody he thinks a great deal of, ought the boy go and tell 'em all about what they said."

"It would do no good, Mark, and might do harm; unless in special cases where it became absolutely necessary to tell one that another had slandered him, I would say nothing about it."

"You would'nt?"

"No, it would do no good for any one to know another had spoken ill of him, and might do a great deal of harm. It would be sure to wound some one's feelings, and the slander would not become wide spread, or even known, if not repeated."

"Well, s'pose a feller wanted to tell it just to learn somebody a lesson—"

"In that instance he should learn a lesson himself first, Mark."

"What?"

"To curb his temper and not be a scandal

monger. To tell what another said merely because you are angry at him, is revenge, and to tell it for the mere pleasure of disseminating news, is to become a scandal monger. You are angry, are you not, Mark?"

"Well, yes—you bet I'm a little hot just now. But say—is there any way a boy can get even without being revengeful."

"Remember that 'vengeance is mine, and I will repay saith the Lord.'"

"Well, I don't doubt that, but then a feller would so like to help the Lord along in these matters sometimes."

"The Lord does His work in His own way, and in this instance I greatly fear that it is not the Lord, but the evil one, you are helping."

"Then you think a boy never ought to tell a body what they hear said about them?"

"Never—unless it is necessary that they should shield themselves from danger in some way. I think you are not in a proper mood, Mark, to decide this matter. Take a week's time and consider it well before you do anything."

"I'll do that," said Mark warmly, "I'll do anything you want me to do. I've found out that you never advise any one wrong, and as long as I do just as you say, I do right."

"You have done remarkably well in mastering yourself in the last two years, Mark, but these sudden outbursts of passion are liable to change the good opinion we have formed of you."

"But, Miss Denesmore, don't think a feller can quit off all at once. It isn't natural, you know. If a locomotive is running full speed and you stop it at once, something will break. I have about quit all the bad habits I had, but an unconverted fellow can't drop all at once—you must let him down easy."

"Perhaps you are right, then try to become converted and be safe. I want you to assist me, Mark, in some missionary work."

"Missionary work—good land, Miss Denesmore, you don't think I am good enough to be a missionary?"

"Of course, every one can help the good cause if he will, and the more you work for others the better you will become. Mr. Strasmore says that in the west end of the city there is a number of children with intemperate parents. I want you to hunt them up, and we will go together among them and try to persuade them to come to the Hall next Sabbath."

"I'll do it," cried Mark enthusiastically, "I'll do whatever you say. Speaking of Mr. Strasmore, I tell you the big boys in his class like him. I don't believe one of them, big or little, would do anything contrary to his wishes. All his boys talk temperance—but that's all nonsense."

"Why?"

"It makes me think, why don't people vote more and do less blowing."

"No man is entitled to more than one vote, and what more can he do than cast it for the man or cause he thinks most sacred?"

"A heap more," cried Mark, "every good man ought to be able to influence a dozen more men in the right. Let 'em get to work coaxing them to vote just as I coax the boys at school, sometimes, to do the way I want to, and then they'd carry things. There is Judge Humphrey. Just see what a fraud he is, playing pig and puppy all the time, and people who claim to be temperance people voting for him, too. When he is among temperance people he claims to be a temperance man—in moderation. Because he occupies the position of a judge to decide criminal cases, he thinks he ought not to make much blow about it. When he is among the whisky men he denounces temperance people as fanatics and fools. Oh, I've heard him do that. He thought I was only a boy and he paid no attention to me. He goes to saloons and drinks until his face is red and he can hardly walk straight, and then they say he is a temperance man. When whisky cases come up for him to decide, the law is always against temperance—yet he is a temperance man. When Jim Sprout, the druggist, was arrested for selling liquor, he let him pay the costs in some cases, and some he dismissed altogether and gave him all the time he wanted on others. But Sprout is the brother-

in-law of Judge Humphreys' brother, and some say that is the reason Judge Humphreys lets him off so easily. After elections are over Judge Humphreys sometimes makes a temperance speech and then gets drunk before the week is out. He gets whisky votes because he is a whisky man and temperance votes because he is a temperance man."

"People may get their eyes open to Judge Humphreys yet, Mark."

"Well, they had better get 'em open soon, for he comes up for re-election. It's not much use to have temperance laws if you don't have a temperance judge to enforce 'em. Humphreys is temperance to the back bone when he wants temperance votes, but he is always finding some flaw in testimony or the law to let whisky sellers out. Now, because Humphreys is a rich and powerful man you must not say he does wrong, when he is a grand fraud."

"I believe you are right, Mark, though your language is forcible. I hope they will beat Humphreys next time. Your ideas are original."

"Yes, father always said I was full of original sin. I know how things ought to be and when I get to be a man I'm going to try to right 'em. Humphreys will find one man who is not afraid to talk about him and tell just what he is. He can't scare me out as he did the editor who published the piece about him, and make me hush

up." Mark was about to leave, when Pauline told him to come to the flower garden and she would send his sister a bouquet.

So absorbed had Mark become in the discussion of Judge Humphreys' dual character that he had forgotten the great object of his visit until he had the bouquet in his hand and started down the street.

"It wont do to give her this," said Mark to himself as he hurried down the street. "No, that would be rewarding her for abusing Pauline. I wont do it. I might return good for evil and heap coals of fire on her head, but Maria is not one to be punished that way.

He crossed some open streets and came to the premises of old Joe Hammond. The wretched house and restaurant stood on the corner and on the right hand side was a board fence or wall enclosing the yard and concealing it from view. Thinking of Joe Hammond and many more like him, Mark was hardly aware of what he was doing until he had gone around the wall and stopped at a gate that stood ajar. A little form glided through the gate, and not noticing the boy, threw some fine blocks she had brought in her apron down upon the pavement.

"Now!" she said, infantile pleasure lighting up the innocent little face. "Lillie make play house wiz these b'ocks. Deena no split 'oo in kindling wood."

"Helloa, little girl, what is your name?" asked Mark without changing his position. The child now saw the well dressed boy standing looking at her, and dropping her head, put her finger to the corner of her mouth and after a moment's hesitation said:

"I is Lillie?"

"Yes, and a real pretty Lillie you are," said the boy enthusiastically. "Is old Joe Hammond your father?"

"Do Hammond, he's papa."

"Would you like these flowers, my little girl?"

"Ess—we dot no fowers. Mamma 's sick."

"A home needs few flowers with such a Lillie as you growing in it." She did not understand him, but her large blue eyes opened wide with admiration for both flowers and donor. Mark watched her as she brushed back the golden curls which trespassed on her fair forehead. Putting the flowers to her face and then holding them off to get a better view of them, she exclaimed:

"Oh, make mamma so glad!" and turning about she was off in a moment.

"Good-bye little rosebud," said Mark as she disappeared inside the great wall of boards. "If old Joe Hammond was but half a man," he thought "he wouldn't get drunk, for that child's sake."

Mark was not old enough to know that strong drink alienated husbands from wives, fathers

from children, and sons from their mothers. It makes such demons of men that they hate all they naturally should love. We wonder at the effect of this serpent's bite, and yet make no effort to destroy the serpent.

Lillie Hammond entered her mother's sick room and laid the elegant bouquet of flowers on the sick bed, saying:

"See, mamma, see, eez is for 'oo."

"Where did my little girl get them?"

"Boy, mamma—a boy, a date bid boy dive 'em to me."

Who is he, what is his name?"

The child shook her puzzled little head and said she did'nt know.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FATAL STEP.

"O teacher! some great mischeif had befallen
To that meek man, who well had sacrificed!
Is pity thus and pure devotion paid?"

—*Milton.*

WHILE Mark was talking with Lillie Hammond, having utterly forgotten his spoiled sister, whom he had started out to humiliate, Maria was at home trembling with apprehension, and giving vent to her passions by long screams which at intervals of every few moments filled the house.

The long afternoon passed, the quiet evening twilight came, and Maria was miserable indeed —lamenting the events of the early afternoon, and warring with her conscience, at times wishing she was dead, and at others declaring she cared not what the result of Mark's disclosures might be.

At last the bell rang, and Dr. Denesmore was announced. Her astonishment and fears were almost unbearable. Mark had gone to Guy, and he had doubtless come for some sort of an explanation. Well, she at least would have the opportunity of saying to her lover that she

meant nothing. Hastily arranging her toilet and assuming an expression so sweet that one would not think that that pretty face could have ever been soured, she hastened to the parlor, where the young doctor was waiting.

"I thought you would never come," were her first words before she had time to think that it might be possible Mark had not told him after all.

"Business has been very pressing of late," said Guy, "and though you have been out of sight you were by no means out of mind."

She now realized the possibility of Mark's threat having miscarried. If it had not, it had evidently made little impression on Dr. Denesmore's mind. He was very agreeable, and gradually all the unpleasant thoughts of the afternoon slipped from Maria's mind, and she gave herself up wholly to the society of her lover.

Later in the evening Mark returned home, and noiselessly passing down the hall, walked to the parlor door, which stood slightly ajar. A few thin rays of light issued from within, which aroused the boy's curiosity. Mark pushed the door open and took one step inside and paused. Guy and Maria were both sitting on the sofa, side by side. Her head was resting against his shoulder, his arm was about her waist, and his hand held her s. So completely were the

lovers absorbed with each other that they did not see or hear the boy, who had hard work to keep from laughing at what, to him, was a most ridiculous sight. Mark's mischievous mind was busy at work trying to get the most he could out of the grand event. He turned quickly but noiselessly around and started down the hall.

"Well, that means business," he said to himself, when so far away that there was no danger of his being heard. "I guess Maria's got him, sure enough. Well, she's got the best of the bargain. The young doctor may think those black eyes pretty now, but wait until he sees the lightning flash. Her hands are white and small, but there are claws there." He met a servant girl at this moment, and stopping her, in great excitement said: "Bridget! Bridget! do you know what's the matter with Maria?"

"No, yer honor, to be sure; what's the matter wid the young leddy?"

"She's in the parlor in an unconscious state. Get Manda and go there at once."

With many exclamations of alarm the Irish girl hurried away, and Mark, brimful and running over with mischief, ran off into his mother's room, stopping at the door just long enough to say:

"Mother! Maria is in the parlor in an unconscious state," and was gone again. He went to the kitchen, where aunt Dinah, the colored cook, was just ready to go home.

"Aunt Dinah!" he cried excitedly, "Miss Maria is in an unconscious condition in the parlor. Don't lose a minute, but get your camphor bottle and run to her."

"Sake's alibe, chile! what am de matter?"

"I don't know; there is no time to ask any questions—go at once."

Snatching her camphor bottle from the mantel, the fat form of old aunt Dinah went waddling along the hall with something very much like a run. Mark glanced at the fat old woman, heard her excited puffs, and saw the bottle in her hand, and the loose end of her red bandanna handkerchief floating from its turban-like fold, and fell down into the cook's easy chair and kicked and screamed with laughter. He was still roaring when aunt Dinah came back, trying to conceal the vexed smile on her face—

"What d'ye mean, chile?" she asked, trying to conceal the humorous twinkle in her eyes. "I jess clar ef I was yo' mudder ef I didn't whoop you ef it war de last ting I ebber done."

"Why, aunt Dinah, wasn't she unconscious?" asked Mark.

"Unconscious!—wall, I guess she war, honey, he, he, he, he." It was too much for the good-natured aunt Dinah, and she leaned against a table and laughed until it seemed as if she would never regain her breath.

"Aunt Dinah, tell me just what you saw in

the parlor?" said Mark, trying to control his own risibles.

"G'lang, now, chile; d'ye reckin' I'm gwine to tell family secrets?"

"It's no secret when told in the family; besides, I will get it all in an exaggerated form from Bridget and Manda."

"Dat's so. I nebber saw gals zaggerate so in all my bawn days. Dey'll be tellin' a awful mess o' stuff."

"It makes no difference, aunt Dinah, for Guy and Maria are engaged."

"Law's a massa, yo' don't say, now? Why didn't I heah ob it afore?"

"I guess it just happened. I came along and saw her in his arms, and knew that meant business; so I thought it was time everybody was knowing it, and began to scatter the good news. I say, aunt Dinah, didn't you find her in an unconscious state?"

"Oh, hush, honey," said aunt Dinah, smoothing out her snow-white apron with her hand, and folding her black, shining arms. "I jes come 'long on de run, an' right in de room stood dem gals Bridget and Manda, boff dumb-foundered-like. Den yer ma, she jest come runnin', all pantin' an' scart like she was gwine to faint. She run past us, went up to wha' Miss Maria lay in de Doctor's arms, an' said: 'Oh, Doctor, what am de matter wid my daughter—what do

all dis mean?' Ef ye'll believe me, needer Miss Maria nor de Doctor had seed or heerd us. Oh, ye orter seed how mad Miss Maria looked. O me. Den de gals an' me, we got out o' dah putty quick. Dey's engaged, sartin, shuah."

"Oh, yes, you can bet they are engaged, aunt Dinah, or you'd never have found 'em in that interesting position."

"I guess yer right, honey. Ef I'se got to look arter de cookin' fur de weddin' I'm not goin' to be pestered to def wid dat Bridget tellin' me how Mrs. Malhoney use to season tings. I'se not cooked long afo' de wah for nuffin'."

"You'll not be bothered with Bridget, Dinah. I say, aunt Dinah, couldn't you get a boy some soft gingerbread and cream? It seems I'm always hungry."

"Laws sakes, honey, yo' can hab any 'mount ob it, but it's cold, an' it's no 'count when it's cold, but jes wait." She left the room, and returned in a few moments with a glass of cream and gingerbread, Mark's favorite.

"Do you know the Hammonds, aunt Dinah?" Mark asked, as he proceeded to eat his favorite luncheon

"Ole Joe Hammond! I reckin I do. Mrs. Wessenger, de woman I worked for afo' I came heah, used to take a sight o' pains wid Mrs. Hammond. One day when Lillie was a wee bit of a baby, she sent me dar, an' I nebber saw

nicer people an' Deena, an' her mudder, an' Geo'ge. I jess said to Missus Hammond, dat son Geo'ge of your'n will be de comfort ob yo' 'clinin' y'ars. He 'll nebber break a mudder's heart."

"George Hammond! why he's the biggest drunkard in town," broke in Mark. "He is drunk all the time."

"Geo'ge Hammond drunk!" cried Aunt Dinah in amazement. "Oh, Master Mark, who am safe? I is afraid my Jefferson Lea 'll be next."

"I tell you, Aunt Dinah, whisky is a dangerous thing to handle. No one's safe while there's a bit of it left. The Denesmores never have a drop in their house, but they are not entirely safe, because there's the serpent waiting outside to bite 'em. I wish you wouldn't use brandy in your seasoning."

"Good laws, Master Mark, can't git nuffin' in place of it."

"Then let things go without seasoning. George Hammond may have got to liking whisky by tasting it in sauce."

"Bress de Lawd, he nebber taste it in mine, an' nobody else ebber will agin. I'll nebber put it in—no, not ef I git turned off for it."

"You'll not be discharged, Aunt Dinan; if you are, I'll give you a recommend, and state why you were turned off."

Aunt Dinah arose, and looking at the clock, said: "Ef it ain't nine! I allers git home afo' eight. What 'll Washington Irvin say!"

"Tell him you have been a witness to some first-class courting."

"Ha, ha, ha, Mark, it may be you and dat Lillie Hammond next time."

That night in her dreams Aunt Dinah saw Mark a great bearded man, and Lillie a bright young woman, and was cooking for their wedding. She had frosted the cake until it was like a snow flake, when, Bridget declaring it was inferior to Mrs. Malhoney's, threw it from the window. So great was Aunt Dinah's rage that she awoke.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WEDDING.

"Self-love still stronger, as its object's nigh;
Reasons at distance, and in prospects lie."
—*Pope.*

MARK was right in his conjectures of a wedding in the near future. The day set was a few weeks sooner than the date for William Strasmore's marriage to Pauline. Guy had spoken of a double wedding, but Maria had serious objections, and her wish was law to him. She was so selfish that on her wedding day she wanted no divided attentions or congratulations.

Guy lived in a paradise of anticipation, in which all good men perhaps once live—anticipation of the hour when the fulfillment of time would make the woman he loved his own, to care for, protect and adore. At home all shared his happy mood, and if occasionally behind the scenes Pauline stood and trembled for her brother's future, or even shed tears, no one was the wiser, not even her own betrothed.

Very different, indeed, were the feelings of Maria; she knew now to a certainty that Guy loved her and that she would become his wife. She thought it was just as it should be, for she

was just the woman to preside over his magnificent home. Of course they would live more grandly than any one else. She was irritable to all the household, and when Mark reminded her that in view of her coming marriage she ought to be a little more pleasant, she stamped her small, pinched foot on the floor and bade him be gone.

Mr. Day was pleased with the coming marriage of his daughter. Guy was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him, but in addition to that he was the son of a wealthy man. Honors without wealth were empty, indeed, to Mr. Day. To Maria he proudly said:

"You are going to do very well, but no better than you should. That face of yours is worth a fortune and would be sure to attract a man of wealth."

Maria consulted the small mirror in her fan to see if her loveliness had increased since she consulted the large French mirror in her dressing room a few moments before. She had been taught to worship the beauty of her face and figure, therefore we must be lenient toward her. Selfishness and every evil relative thereto is the result of flattered vanity. Mrs. Day was all smiles and amiability for weeks preceding the wedding. Ernest Day was decidedly morose and very seldom joined the family circle. He never referred to the subject daily discussed by

the other members of the household. He never congratulated his sister and actually seemed to avoid Guy. All the while he was brooding—silently brooding over something.

Aunt Dinah had her own way, and Bridget was told she must not molest her with any insinuations about Mrs. Malhoney. Mark frequently came to the kitchen, for what boy has not been attracted by the odors of baking cakes? He stood with eyes wide open in admiration of Aunt Dinah's artistic skill as worked out in a handsome lily leaf and bud on the frosting of the bride's cake. Her black skin was quite in contrast with her snowy apron and turban. Aunt Dinah chuckled with delight at Mark's praise of her skill, and as a reward allowed him to sample cakes, jellies and preserves. What boy does not like to be about the kitchen at baking time and sample the various dishes? Mark was delighted and he sounded Aunt Dinah's praise until she laughingly said:

"Well, honey, I tries to do my best, 'cause dis am an extra 'casion. I hope I'll lib to bake yo' weddin' cakes for yo', chile."

"I hope so too, Aunt Dinah. Anybody can afford to get married just to have you bake for them."

"Oh, hush up, boy, yo' doan' know what ye's talkin' 'bout, 'tall."

* * * * * * *

The day for the grand wedding came. For weeks it had been the all absorbing topic of conversation in social circles. The most aristocratic church in the town had been selected by Miss Maria, for she wanted to make a grand display. As the Days were not church members, of course they were confined to no particular creed. On that day the large church was crowded, and many rich and elaborate toilets were to be seen in the assembly. The wedding was in English fashion to suit Miss Day's taste, the bridegroom and his best man entering the chancel from the vestry room and there awaiting the bride. The organ was playing a wedding march when the bride entered, leaning on the arm of her father who was to give her away. She was preceded by four ushers and followed by four bridesmaids. The bride's costume was elegant; her dress was of white brocade and satin, the front being of plain satin laid in several square folds, over which was a tablier of the brocade. The corsage was cut in a wide, deep square and trimmed with point lace. A small spray of orange blossoms was secured with diamonds. She wore a necklace of diamonds, to which was attached a brooch, in the centre of which was a magnifi cent diamond. She carried in her hand a bouquet of lilies of the valley.

When Guy Denesmore stepped to the side of his bride and took her hand in his, poor Pauline's

heart almost ceased to beat. Was he entering on the road to ruin? Was he taking a step which he must all his life regret in silence? she asked herself. She was only conscious of the good minister saying some half intelligible words, and of low and solemn prayer. Then came congratulations. Pauline's lips were cold when she kissed her new sister, but they seemed to meet lips of ice. Involuntarily she shuddered, she knew not why.

At Mr. Day's house the decorations were magnificent. The main parlor was decorated with a large marriage-bell of white roses, carnations and lilies of the valley, under which the bride and groom stood to recieve the congratulations of friends. On the other side of the bell stood cornucopias of roses and lilies of the valley. In each corner of the room were groups of palms. The main mantel and mirror were decorated with smilax and roses. The pictures were hung with berries, ivy and ferns; through the verdant wreaths the gilded frames gleamed in the gaslight. The crystal chandelier was also trimmed with smilax and roses. The rear parlor was decorated with smilax and plants, and the dining room, where the collation was, contained many rosebuds and full-blown roses.

Dancing was dispensed with on this evening for the sake of Guy's parents. Maria yielded this one time to the wishes of her husband but resolved never to do so again.

As Mr. John Denesmore gazed upon the beautiful bride, he did not wonder that his son had chosen her, for never, in all his life, had he seen a more attractive woman, she seemed the ideal of some skilled artist rather than a real person of flesh and blood. But when he came to greet his son's wife, her cold and selfish nature were so apparent, that he almost shrunk from her, and turned away with a strange sadness and undefinable dread. She had an irresistible charm about her, but it was more like the charm of a serpent than a pure, good woman. Pauline, who had not spoken to Ernest Day for many months, warmly grasped his hand on this evening and said:

"We are both gainers, Mr. Day. You have gained a brother and I a sister." She was chilled by the coldness of his hand, and the wild expression in his eyes frightened her. After giving her a stare from his cold, almost glassy eyes, he said:

"Yes, Miss Denesmore, we are both gainers. I am satisfied with Maria's choice."

She left his side as soon as politeness would permit, and avoided him the remainder of the evening. Somehow she felt that he would bring woe upon her life.

The next day Guy Denesmore and his young wife set out on a bridal tour through the west.

CHAPTER XIII.

OUT OF THE DITCH.

"Alas, 'tis true, I have gone here and there,
And made myself a motley to the view,
Gor' mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affection new."

—*Shakespeare.*

William Strasmore was true to the trust committed to his care, and determined not to stop short of the entire extermination of the evil. But the minds of the masses had not yet been educated up to the advanced idea of prohibition, and he determined to be one of those humble educators. At this time a large temperance organization was prospering under his leadership, as was also a juvenile "Band of Hope" under the superintendence of Pauline Denesmore, assisted by himself. It was the intention to bring all the children of intemperate parents in the city into this organization. Their combined efforts were blessed and many were brought within the folds of this little band.

William Strasmore, in this work to which he had consecrated himself, found many things to make his heart bleed. George Greene, "one of

Mr. Strasmore's boys," as Mark termed them, had been received into the lodge of Independent Order of Good Templars. He told of his own efforts and the efforts of Mr. Strasmore to redeem his father. His father had made many good resolutions and been received several times into the lodge, and notwithstanding the encouragement and prayers of his family and friends, invariably fell. Beset on every hand by temptations, his strong desire to be a man was overcome by an unquenchable thirst, an over-ruling appetite which made him an abject slave to strong drink. Mr. Greene remembered the time when he had no such appetite for liquor. He only drank then "to be social with the boys." But now he was its slave, vainly trying to free himself from this bondage. George Greene, in deep humiliation, said to his fellow workers in this glorious cause:

"Make one more effort for father. I will not say that I think he can resist the temptation, you can only give him a trial. The only way to make his salvation sure is to sweep all saloons and places where liquors are sold from the face of the earth."

As William Strasmore returned to his hotel that night, he scarcely heeded the darkness or drenching rain. The street lamps burned dimly, and in places the way was obscure, but his heart was heavy and his mind full of sad thoughts.

What an herculean task he had undertaken, and with what little success had his efforts been met.

A smothered groan fell on his ear, and he stopped to look about him. Another gutteral sound fell on his ears, and now he discovered an object lying in the gutter but a few feet from where he stood. He went to it, and never had humanity presented itself in such a fallen state, to his eyes. There, lying in the mud, his bare head resting on his arm, his clothes bespattered with mud, was a young man about his own age; a man created in the image of God, with wisdom and capabilities, groveling in the mud like the swine, a young man, who, a little more than a year before was respected by all who knew him, and the pride of his mother's heart. William gazed on this wreck of manhood a few moments, turned him over and tried to get him on his feet but was unequal to the task, while the poor, besotted wretch only swore at his would-be benefactor, and asked to be let alone.

William hailed a passing policeman and said: "Please, sir, help me get this man on his feet."

"Want him taken to the lock-up?" asked the officer.

"No, sir."

"A friend of yours?"

"I am a friend to him but do not think he is friendly toward me."

Despite his efforts to resist them, they suc-

ceeded in getting the poor fellow on his feet. He uttered an unintelligible jumble of threats and imprecations on the heads of his benefactors.

"Where d'ye intend takin' him?" asked the officer.

"To the Park House," was the answer.

"What, take this sot there. The proprietor will kick him out."

"No he will not," said William assuringly. "I have rooms there, and he shall sleep in my bed, and I will keep him there until he has regained his reason."

"You are Mr. Strasmore, the lawyer, I believe?" said the policeman, after giving our hero a curious look.

"Yes sir."

"At your temperance work, eh? Well you've got a tough case here. His father is an old veteran toper, and of course it's natural his son should follow. It runs in the family."

"Who is he?"

"Good gracious, man, don't you know him? why you just now said he was a friend of yours."

"I am a friend to him, I said; because he belongs to the human family, I am his friend. I will keep him with me until he is sober, and then give him some good advice. If he does not take it, I have done my duty, that is all."

"Well, you beat all fellows I ever met," said the policeman, scratching his head. "This fellow

FALLEN "IMAGE."—IN THE GUTTER.

"A man created in the image of God, with wisdom and capabilities, groveling in the mud like the swine."—See page 119.

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is old Joe Hammond's son, George. Both of them are known drunkards."

"George Hammond — George Hammond," said William Strasmore, thoughtfully, "I have certainly heard that name before."

The hotel was reached, and George Hammond's mud-stained clothes were removed. He was washed and arrayed in some of William's clean night garments, and placed on a clean bed where he soon fell asleep. In fact he was only semi-conscious all the time.

"Whose work is this?" William Strasmore asked the policeman.

"What a question!" laughed the policeman. "His own work of course, whose else could it be?"

"No," returned William, shaking his head gravely. "It is not his own work, but the work of intemperance, for which voters are responsible. Did you vote against license?"

"I did not."

"Then you are responsible; think of yourself aiding to bring about such misery."

"Pshaw! Mr. Strasmore, you look at it the wrong way: you are on the unpopular side, and you'll make enemies by it. Lawyers to be successful must take a glass occasionally themselves. Besides one man's vote makes no difference, and when we voted for license, we did not vote for men to make beasts of themselves."

"I fear you cast your vote without giving the matter a serious thought. Had you stopped a moment to think, you must have known that this and worse would have been the result. Each voter can use his influence at the polls as well as elsewhere. I never have taken a drink with my clients and never will, even though I should have to abandon my business for not doing so."

"Well, it's no use for us to argue this question, Mr. Strasmore. I cannot change your mind nor can you change mine."

William thanked him for his services, slipped a silver coin in his hand in addition, and bade him good night, locked the door, and throwing himself on the sofa, was soon asleep.

When George Hammond awoke, the sun was beaming in at the window and William Strasmore, with folded arms, stood at his bedside gazing compassionately upon him. For a moment the bewildered youth could only stare about him in amazement, and then starting up to a sitting position he asked:

"What does this mean? How came I here?" His head was heavy and his temples throbbed with pain, and he laid back on the pillow while a deathly pallor overspread his face.

"You are with a friend who is going to do all he can for you," said William Strasmore, kindly taking his hand in his own. George was about to make some other inquiry when William stop-

ped him. "Don't try to talk, your head aches and it will make it worse to try to get up or talk. Let me do the talking, for there is much I want to say to you, and as my time is limited I must talk very rapidly and to the point. I am not going to upbraid *you* for the condition in which you were found last night, for you are more to be pitied than blamed. I know that temptations beset men on every side and that while the spirit is willing the flesh is weak."

"If it's not *me*, whom do you censure? A man who makes a fool of himself must not be held blameless."

"Every man who is old enough to vote, who did not work and vote against license, is to blame."

"I never voted for license but once, and then I did it to please my associates. Strong drink has always been my greatest dread from a boy. After I had once fallen it was my master. I wanted to do differently, but it seemed I could not live without stimulants, so great was this awful, burning thirst."

"Can you not make a resolve now to reform, and by the help of God become a man?"

"It's no use. Here in the midst of my old associates, with the temptation constantly before me, to tempt my craving appetite, I cannot reform."

"Do not depend on yourself—ask God to help you."

"I can't believe in a God such as Christians believe in. There is my mother—I have a good mother, Strasmore—who has prayed all her life, and taught me to pray. Oh, how she has prayed for the restoration of my father and that I might be kept from falling. So far from her prayers being answered, we have been sinking lower all the time. No, a God who cannot answer mother's prayers will not hear me."

"Your mother has not done wrong, and her prayers have kept her from wrong doing. Had you prayed for yourself as fervently as she has prayed for you, you would not have fallen. Your mother's prayers may be answered very differently from the way she asks. You may all be instruments of good in the Lord's hands. If you pray, 'lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,' with an earnest desire from the heart, and the proper faith, your prayer will be answered as sure as day succeeds night. I speak from experience. If your companions have an evil influence over you, remove as far from them as you can, so as not to be tempted by them. Choose a different class of associates, and pray for strength and guidance, and your efforts are sure to be blessed. Now, Mr. Hammond, grant me this request; remain in my rooms to-day. By and by, when you feel so disposed, you can go into the other room where a breakfast will be waiting for you. Here are such books as you

will want to read. Think much of yourself, look well into your heart, and find if you have strength to sacrifice your appetite for the sake of justice and mercy to yourself and others. At four we will dine and go out for a drive. The remainder of the day we will spend as much to the mutual benefit of each other as we can." George Hammond, with a desperate resolution to make one more effort at reformation, consented. "Now, if you will give me the number and street of your family, I will tell them you are going to spend the day with me, and make no allusion to the events of last night."

George Hammond looked very grateful for the gentle consideration of his new found friend and gave his number, and William left the room.

When alone the inebriate gave way to the most bitter reflections. A conflict was raging within his breast and all the pent-up feelings of remorse seemed to burst forth and overwhelm him, and he groaned aloud in agony. "I can lie here no longer," he finally said, springing from the bed and putting on his clothes, which had been cleaned and prepared for him. He went into the adjoining room, where he partook of some of the food awaiting him there and sat down to await the return of his benefactor.

There were books in the book case, but he could not read, he could only review the misspent twenty months, and try to look hopefully

at the future. What a wreck twenty months of dissipation had made him. Fully realizing his position he was in both physical and mental agony. Once the craving appetite mastered him, and he went to the door intending to break his good promise. He felt relieved when he found the door locked.

Knowing his friend would be tempted, William had taken the wise precaution to lock the door. Ah! if all the doors between the tempter and tempted could be barred, what a blessing to poor, suffering humanity it would prove! The door is not only unlocked, but the temptation is at every corner appealing urgently to all the senses and actually dragging the unfortunate victim within its fatal folds. The tempted, led on by an unquenchable thirst, does not stop to think that behind those dark screens lurks humanity's "*Worst Foe*" ready to seize upon the unwary and to drag him into his den of despair.

George Hammond, like many another young man, knew all this, but felt sure that he could go so far and no farther, only to become a living example of the fallacy and danger of such doctrine.

CHAPTER XIV.

MARK AS A MISSIONARY.

"But there are bright visions
On which we may gaze,
And no fear of their fading
E'er darken our ways.
There are gates that are golden,
And dreams unsurpassed:—
They are visions of Heaven
That endure to the last."

—*Musick.*

"WHAT Lillie Hammond 's a very pretty little child," said Mark Day to himself as he passed old Joe Hammond's miserable house, after having stopped just long enough to give the bright eyed little fairy a bouquet of choice flowers. "She will make a smashin' fine lookin' woman—she will—when she gets grown." Mark had just started out on his missionary work and with little Lillie Hammond in mind, he wended his way toward the West End, as the western part of the town was called. This was a locality which, in American parlance, is commonly denominated as tough. Here resided a majority of those creatures who spend their

hard earnings for that which robs them of body and soul.

"Where am I going and what am I going to do when I get there?" the juvenile missionary asked himself. "Well, I guess I can find my way out, I came here to find where certain boys and girls live, so that Miss Denesmore and I can call on them and try to enlist them in our Sabbath School, and finally our temperance work—that makes me a sort of home missionary I guess."

He was certainly a bright eyed, comely young missionary, and one calculated to do a great deal of good in the cause in which he had engaged. He reached a low, unpainted cottage surrounded by a paling fence, which, as well as the house, spoke of neglect and threatened to tumble to decay. An old woman was seated in a well-worn arm chair on the shady side of the house, and Mark thought that this would be as good a place as any to begin his work, so he paused with his hand on the rickety old gate and said:

"How do you do, grandma—can I come in?"

The old woman raised her head and looking at him from under her spectacles, answered:

"Why o' course ye kin ef yer civil—who are ye any way?"

"I'm a boy," answered Mark entering the gate and advancing toward the old lady. "I'm a missionary, and I guess you'll find me civil."

"O' course ye be. Here, Hannar, bring this boy a cheer. It's so hot in the house that ye'd better set out in the shade," said the old woman apologetically. Hannah proved to be a dirty, barefooted girl about Mark's own age. When the well-dressed boy took the chair and thanked her so kindly, she said to herself that he was real nice, and wanted very much to know his name and where he lived, but in the parlance of her grandmother "couldn't git up the spunk," and contented herself by leaning on her grandma's chair back, occasionally giving him a sly glance. After a few moments Mark plunged into the object of his visit, saying:

"I come here to learn something about the boys and girls who live in this locality. There is a Christian lady who wishes to know their names, and places where they live. She intends to visit them all and persuade them to spend a couple of hours each Sabbath at the Mission Hall. They will all be better for it, and will soon think it real nice to go there. I did'nt like the idea of going there myself at first, but now there is no place where I have so much fun."

"Better'n the theatre?" said Hannah, evidently speaking under the impulse of the moment, and hanging her head and blushing a moment afterward.

"Yes, it beats a theatre all to pieces," returned Mark enthusiastically.

Grandma took her glasses from her forehead, wiped them on the corner of her apron, looking sharply at Mark all the while, then mounting them again on her nose she said:

"Yes, I s'pose you like to go thar, cos yer not ashamed o' yer clothes, an' kin hev money to put in the box when it's passed 'round; but how 'd you s'pose this child 'd feel among them stuck up folks that's no better'n she is?" nodding her head toward Hannah. "Thar's one thing, her father's an honest man, if he isn't rich enough to live in style. He don't cheat no'n, an' he earns his bread by the sweat o' his brow;"

"What is his name?" Mark asked.

"Our name's Brown. I live with my son, Sam Brown, who works at the machine shops, and a likely good man he is, too, if I do say it myself; he's got no bad habits."

"I don't doubt it, and I'm going to the shops to see him sometime, if he'll talk to a boy like me," said Mark.

"Oh, he'll talk when he finds you're friendly; but he's a mighty proud man, my Sam is, and wont be run over by no rich folks. He's more proud like, cos we're in sich a neighborhood, all carousin', drinkin' an' sich carryin's on as ye never heerd; but Sam wants all to understand that he aint one o' 'em."

"Are the people in this neighborhood a bad drinking set?"

"Yes, the men are, but the women are a sort o' easy goin', like, don't 'pear to worry much 'bout their men lettin' things go at loose eends, an' most o' the young uns is mighty bad. Ef goin' to the Hall will help 'em any, fur goodness sake try an' git 'em all to go. But thar's one family ye'll find tough. Their name 's Barnes, an' I'll pint out the house fur ye afore ye go. It's jist around the corner."

Mark made some further inquiry in regard to the neighborhood, and she gave him a thorough description of some of the worst people in it, concluding with: "That Bill and Jinny Barnes are the wust of 'em all. Bill 's 'bout twelve or thirteen years old. Now if Sam had a boy that big he'd have some help out 'o him, but laws—that Bill Barnes aint no help to his daddy. His ma was lettin' on that Bill worked and earned a little an' his daddy took it away from him fur drink, an' Bill sot right down an' cussed an' swore he'd never work agin. But mebbe he'll change his mind ef he goes t' the Hall. You jest take a old 'omans advice an' go an see how the wind blows afore takin' a young lady there."

"I'll do that, grandma."

"Now, if you kin do anything with Bill Barnes, why it'll be time well spent. Ef he'd only earn a little money to buy his ma some tea it would be sich a blessin' fur the poor soul, fur I don't see how them Barneses do live, no how.

Sam don't spend any o' his earnin's in drink an' its all we kin do to live. We can't lay up nuthin' fur a rainy day, an' old Barnes is never sober only when he's in the lock-up."

"I thank you very much, grandma, and now I must be going, for I intend to call on the Barneses," said Mark. "When the lady comes in this neighborhood she will call on you first."

"Ef ye'll jist let us know when yer comin', we'll fix up a little," said the old woman, her eyes sparkling brightly beneath her spectacles. Sam's so proud, he'd feel orful bad ef company come an' we warnt fixed up."

"We will come day after to-morrow," said Mark, and turning to Hannah added, "you must coax your father to let you come to the Hall; oh, it is much better than the theatre or dime museum. It's not like either."

When Mark was gone the girl who had been standing biting her finger nails said:

"Aint he nice, grandma? Who is he?"

"Why, he's a rich man's boy."

"He's not bad, an' I thought ye said all rich people was stuck up?"

"Most rich folks is stuck up, but he don't seem to be. May be the Hall 's made him better'n the rest on 'em."

The Barnes family was the last on Mark's list to visit, for from the discription he had he greatly dreaded them. He met with fair success at the

other houses, and many dirty youngsters promised to be at the Mission Hall next Sabbath. Mark at last came to the home of the Barneses, a wretched, tumble-down hut, betraying filthy negligence to even the passer-by. Mark entered between two half rotted posts where a gate had once hung, but had long since disappeared. A few decaying pickets were all that was left of what had once been a fence enclosing the premises. He went to the door and rapped several times, but receiving no answer was about to go away, when he heard a boy's voice scream:

"You, Jinny, come here!"

Mark hastened around the side of the house, and when he had turned the corner saw a boy standing in the rear yard with his back toward him. This was undoubtedly the terrible Bill Barnes. He was barefooted, ragged and dirty, and his loose trousers held up by one suspender. His uncombed hair was bushed out beneath his slouched hat, and even peeped through a hole in the crown. Although his face was not seen, Mark knew it must be as dirty as his hands.

"I tell yer Jinny to come here," he again screamed. A half grown girl appeared from around the corner of the house opposite Mark, at a full run. Her dress was short, and as dirty and patched as her brother's clothes, and her feet and legs were bare. There was no covering on her head save the thick mass of matted hair.

"What d' yer want, Bill?" she asked, coming up to him.

For answer, Bill seized her by the neck and shoulders, and dragging her to a tub of dirty water that stood near, plunged her head into the water. "Thar, Jin," he cried as he let her, strangling and screaming, get up, "that fur eatin' my apple."

As soon as she got the water out of her eyes she began throwing water at Bill with both hands. Bill quickly got out of harm's way and began pelting her with dirt and pellets of mud. Mark, unobserved, watched the combat for some time. Here were the rank weeds of ignorance and selfishness choking out every good germ. The longer Mark watched the more he determined to make Bill give him a hearing. At last, tired of waiting, he called out:

"Helloa, Bill Barnes, what are you up to?"

Both Bill and his sister ceased hostilities, and for a moment stared in open-mouthed wonder at the well-dressed boy.

"Well, dandy, where did you drop from?" Bill at last asked, at the same time seizing a clod of dirt and hitting Mark on the shoulder. Mark picked up some dirt and threw, hitting Bill in the face, saying:

"Answer my question first, Bill." For a moment Bill stared at him in amazement, and then he cried:

"Darned ef ye aint a good shot, dandy, but I bet ye can't lick me," at the same time taking one or two steps toward Mark. But the well-dressed boy, much to his astonishment, met him half way, and taking him by the arms looked him in the face and said: "I am not going to fight you, Bill, for I have quit fighting. I am larger and stronger and better muscled than you, so, you see, I would have no trouble in whipping you."

"Yer lie, yer never licked any body."

"I wish I never had. But I tell you I will not fight, I leave that for the dogs."

"Yer a little upstart—yer a dandy."

"Well, if good clothes makes a dandy, I always was one, I can't help it. I'm not to blame because my father's well off. If you do not believe I am the strongest, I will wrestle with you and hold you down until you agree not to fight."

"I'll do it," said Bill. "Yer the first dandy I ever seed that 'd take a friendly tussle wi' a poor boy. Wont yer take off yer coat, I don't like to dirty it."

"No, never mind—are you ready?"

"Yes."

Mark's foot darted out like lightning and tripped Bill to the ground, where he held him despite all his struggles.

"I'll give up," he said at last.

"Wont say anything more about fighting?" No answer came. "I intend to hold you here until you promise not to fight, for I came here to talk to you and your sister. A lady sent me to see you."

"Jinny" who had been standing looking silently on, wondering where on earth that boy came from, when she heard a lady's name spoken she hastened up to him and asked:

"I say, boy, is she a rich lady?"

"Yes."

"Lives in a big house with a little house on top?"

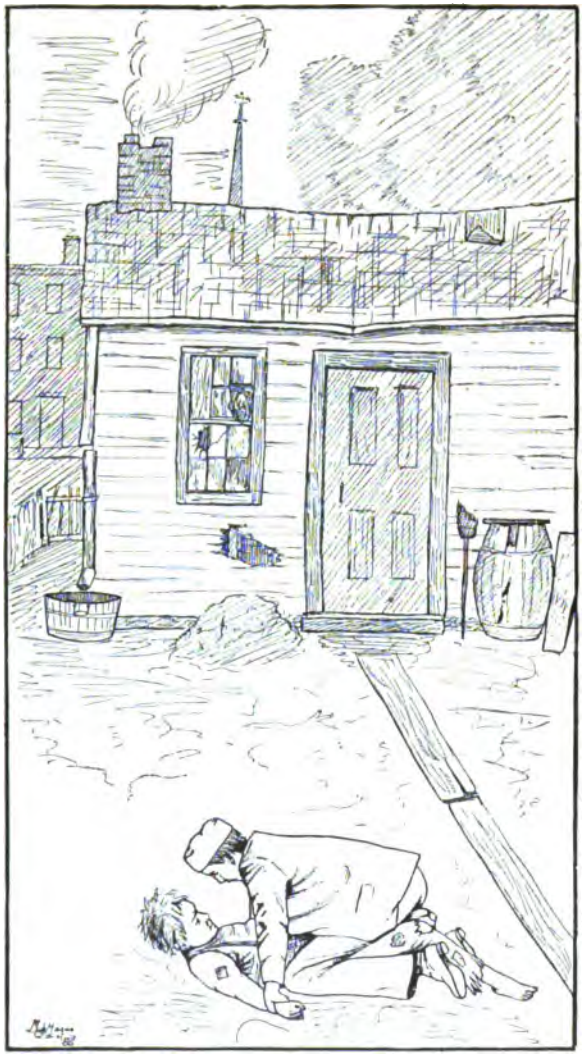
"Yes, and has everything she wants. This lady is coming to see you."

"I wont say nuthin' about lickin' yer—let me up," said Bill Barnes. "Swear t' God 'll keep quiet. What 's yer name?"

"Mark Day, and you are Bill Barnes," he answered, at the same time letting him up. "This, I guess, is Jennie, your sister."

"Yes."

In a few minutes they were all seated on the ground, in the shade of the house, talking very pleasantly. Mark was telling them of Mission Hall and how well they would be treated there. Bill Barnes, who had but one idea of treat, which was the bar-room idea, asked what kind of liquor they kept. Mark told him they had no kind of drinks, but nice books and papers



MARK DAY AS A MISSIONARY.

"I intend to hold you here till you promise not to fight."—See page 136.

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The Sabbath following nearly all those children were at Mission Hall. Hannah Brown had wonderful things to tell her grandmother when she returned home, the most pleasant of which was, that no box was passed for money.

"They explained that the c'lections were taken up at other Sunday Schools t' s'port our 'n," said Hannah.

CHAPTER XV.

ONCE MORE A MAN.

"Yet less the pang when, through the tedious hours,
Remembrance sheds around her genial showers,
Calls back the vanished days to rapture given,
When love was bliss, and beauty formed our heaven."

—*Byron.*

BY the time William Strasmore had returned, George Hammond had formed the determination to conquer the evil within him and be once more a man. As William entered the room, George rose and grasping his hand, said:

"Through you I have conquered, and will conquer. When I found that door locked my first impulse was to break it down, but my better judgment had not been entirely destroyed, and I knew full well that you were doing it for my own good. The worst foe to myself and family was locked out until I had time to arm myself to fight it. Now I am resolved to cut my way through, and conquer my old enemy."

"May God help you!" ejaculated William, devoutly. "I believe you will conquer, but try to overcome your doubts lest they destroy your faith, for if you have not faith to appeal to your

Heavenly Father, you are in a sad state indeed."

"I have often asked myself to-day why I fell the first time," said George, thoughtfully. "There was no excuse for me—I was forewarned, for I had long been a witness to the misery of intemperance, and hated its works, and yet I became a victim. I hate myself when I think how foolish I have been."

"Don't talk so, my friend, you should be thankful that although the evil still exists, you are not past redemption. Have you fixed on any definite course of action for the future?"

"Yes, but I will be governed somewhat by circumstances. I had intended going West, but was waiting to make suitable arrangements for taking my father's family with me; but I will wait no longer. I will go as soon as I can, and make arrangements to take care of them afterward. I long to get away from my old associates and begin life among a new class of people where I will not be so sorely tempted."

William told George that a carriage was waiting to take them on the promised drive, and George being ready they hastened down to it. Earth was giving thanks to the sun for the gracious smiles, and luxuriant beauty in vermillion and emerald was to be seen on every hand. They left the town and drove out into the country. The rain of the night before had quieted the rising dust, and man could gratefully enjoy the

brightness and freshness of the day. Birds were singing from their leafy bowers, and all nature seemed to have donned her holiday attire.

William Strasmore resolved not to allow George Hammond to escape him. He had begun the good work of reformation, and he determined to keep it up until he had succeeded in effectually eradicating the evil in this talented young man. Two weeks later, as they were driving together in the park, one would hardly think this neat, intelligent looking young man was the bloated toper who had been taken from the ditch. True there yet lingered about his face some of the evidences of debauchery. He was not as strong and pure as before he gave way to dissipation. The thoughtless young man who indulges in a debauch will not escape scot free; injured nature will sooner or later bring retribution on the one who dares insult her. They passed Pauline and her mother who were out driving, and William by lifting his hat and bowing, acknowledged their smiles of recognition. George Hammond knew them, though it had been years since he had seen either; and they, in his changed condition failed to recognize him.

"How bright and beautiful Pauline has grown," said George Hammond with a sigh.

"Yes, and her beauty of character outrivals the beauty of her face," said William enthusiastically. "George, she is to be my wife."

George started violently, and a look of pain swept over his face, but in a few moments it was gone, and gaining control over his feelings, he solemnly said:

"I know no other more worthy of you. May God bless you both."

"You cannot dispense with God in common conversation, even though you doubt his existence," said our hero.

"It is a habit, a custom," George answered, gloomily.

"But we all have the habit, and I think it is really something more powerful than a habit. The idea of a God of some kind seems innate in the human consciousness. Why is it that you never find a savage too low in the scale of civilization, not to have some idea of a supreme being? It may be *God*, *Great Spirit* or *Josh*, but it is always the one idea of infinite power. When in distress it is as natural to call on our Heavenly Father for aid as it is for the child when injured to run to its mother. Turn Christian, George, it will help you; it will be one bright ray in your clouded existence. It is not the wealth which makes Mrs. Denesmore and her daughter so bright and happy, but the Christian spirit shining from pure souls within."

George Hammond sighed, and William Strasmore misinterpreting his distress, said:

"I suppose you are not acquainted with Miss Denesmore."

"Yes I am," said George in a hot, jerky manner, which betrayed a strange emotion. "We went to school together when children, though I was a big boy and she a little girl. She and sister Deena were of the same age, and great friends. But after we quit grammar school, she was sent away to a female academy, and we never saw her any more. I hope she will never know how I have fallen, for she will hate me worse than I hate myself."

"You are mistaken, George. She knows of your fall, and you have her warmest sympathy."

"Who told her?" George asked sharply.

"Mark Day."

"Some more of the work of the Day family," and William was astounded to see the furious glances which darted from the eyes of George Hammond. After a few moments, George grew calmer and he added, "Mark is a very bad boy is he not?"

"He was a very bad boy at one time, but now he promises to be an exceptionally good lad. He is rather odd it is true, and adheres to some of his old but least exceptionable traits. His fun loving nature gets him into little scrapes even yet. I met him after he had told Pauline of your troubles, and with his face as sober as a judge he began in his odd way: 'You'd better go to Pauline for I left her awfully blue. I told her about an old chum of her's getting drunk.

I didn't know it was a particular chum you know, but it was, and she went to crying. I don't know what ought to be done with me for making her cry, but I guess if any one can cheer her up it's you.' When I found Pauline she was still in tears, George, and for you."

George's lips quivered, but he dare not speak, and William continued: "She told me something of your boyhood, how hopeful she and all your friends were of you, although you had little at home to encourage you. But she blames herself very much for your downfall. She says you were separated by circumstances, and had almost dropped out of her mind until she heard of you from Mark. She is pleased at your good resolution, and determination to leave the city where temptation awaits you on every hand."

"She should not censure herself for my wrong doing," said George, as William stopped talking.

"I am not so sure of that," William replied. "Pauline did not intentionally err, but like many others on this important question of temperance, thought she was not her brothers' keeper. Pauline realized your peculiar position, and wanted to keep up her friendly social feeling with yourself and sister, though you seemed to grow cool and distant. This she attributed to your sister's sensitiveness regarding the difference in your social scales, and only respected you the more for it. Her circle of friends was very large,

and she finally let you drop. This is the way of the world, and it is wrong. Had she kept alive the friendship and interest she really felt in you, you might have been encouraged to keep in the right path. She could have cheered your sister's lonely heart and encouraged you. When do you leave for the West?"

"To-morrow evening."

"Then Pauline and I will call at your house this evening, and rekindle the fires of friendship which beamed so brightly years ago, and we will try to cheer and comfort your sisters and mother until you send for them to join you in your western home."

That evening when William and Pauline called at the miserable cottage of Joe Hammond, Modenia met them at the door with mingled feelings of pleasure and pain. She longed, and yet feared to greet her school-mate as warmly as she had of old, and when Pauline threw her arms about her neck and kissed her as tenderly as she used to do in the days of her childhood, poor crushed Modenia broke down and shed copious floods of tears while Pauline pressed her to her breast. As soon as she could, Deena recovered her self-possession, and the cheerful manner of Pauline brought a smile again to her face, and a slight tint to her cheek. Mrs. Hammond who was now able to walk about, joined the group, and Lillie sang sweet baby songs, and her young

heart was strangely gladdened. All seemed to exist in a brighter atmosphere than they had ever before known. George was cheerful, and bright hopes of the future seemed to dawn for the Hammonds. Pauline proposed that they form a little party from those present to accompany George to the depot and see him off on the train next evening. At mention of George's departure, a sad look came over Mrs. Hammond's features, and her eyes filled with tears. Pauline who discovered the struggle now going on in the mother's breast, went to her side and said:

"Mrs. Hammond, William and I have talked it all over, and it is for the best. Of course you will be lonesome, but it will not be for a very long time. George will soon have a beautiful home for you in the great West, and you will all go there."

But a dread uncertainty had fallen over the group like an unseen mantle, and all brightness and joy were gone.

"Were it any other temptation than intemperance," thought William Strasmore, "he could escape from it. But he may run to the ends of the earth, and the demon still waits for him. THE WORST FOE is before, behind, and on every side, and everywhere ready to seize upon the unwary at an unguarded moment."

William longed to tell George of the powers of faith to save, but that skeptical nature would

not believe him, and knowing that more earnest appeals than he had made would be useless, he was silent. As William and Pauline rose to go, the door opened, and Joe Hammond, more than half-seas over, entered.

"W'y, ah! good evenin'!" he said, steadying himself on his unsteady legs as well as he could, while his clothes, features and manners betrayed his condition.

"My name is Strasmore," said William, going to the inebriate man and taking his hand. "I am glad to meet you, Mr. Hammond, for I've wanted to make your acquaintance for some time."

"Ye do! Well, I guess ye want to lecture me, don't ye? Well, I—I'm a free man, an' know jest what I'm doin'."

"We called to see your son before he goes away to seek a home in the West."

"Yes, George shouldn't go 'way—hic—foolish notion. Don't do no good. Thinks he can't quit drink—and stay. All nonsense. Drinkin' a little, ye know, don't hurt anybody—don't hurt me."

"You think it don't? It will be the ruin of your soul and body if you don't quit it. George is right; he see's his danger and flies from temptation."

"Young man, ye needn't lecture me. Guess I know."

"It is growing late, now, but I will see you some other time under more favorable circumstances," said William Strasmore.

Hammond staggered through the room, uttering something about meddlesome fools not knowing when to attend to their own business, and the guests of the Hammonds took their leave.

The evening for George's departure came. His mother hung sobbing on his neck, and he assured her that he would be firm in his resolution to resist all temptation. Somehow the mother felt impressed that it would be the last time she would ever see her son again. Accompanied by his sister, Deena, William and Pauline, he set out for the depot.

Mrs. Hammond, with her face bowed in her hands, wept, unconscious of the little child who stood at her side trying to comfort her.

"Don't ty, mamma, don't. Dod will tate care of brother."

"Mamma's darling!" cried Mrs. Hammond, taking the little form in her arms, "yes, God will take care of us all, my child."

When George, his sister and friends reached the depot he found the train belated, and his father there to bid him adieu. As usual, his father was in liquor, and declaring himself the happiest man in the world. His bliss was easily disturbed, however, and his family usually took care not to cross him in any way. Seeing that

tears were in Deena's eyes he staggered up to her and said:

"No more o' that—all nonsense. No use to cry—just goin' away short time—hic—t' sow wild oats. He 'll come back to the old man—wiser 'n he went." Then staggering up to George, with a desire to impress all present with his importance, he added: "Well, George, when you git over this wild goose chase, come back. If yer out o' money an' want help, jest call on the old man, ye know—hic."

The train came thundering in at last, and George kissed his sister, bade his father and friends adieu, and went aboard. Deena saw her brother at the window waving his handkerchief. She kept up bravely until the train started; but when his loved form was no longer in sight, she burst into tears. Pauline comforted her the best she could, and getting in their carriage they were soon whirling away toward Modenia's humble home.

George Hammond had gone out into the world to meet temptation and trials on every hand. He had fallen once, and might he not fall again? In the Old World, when oppression and persecution crushes the weak, they turn their fainting eyes to America, the land of the free and home of the brave. The persecuted who have flocked to fair Columbia's shores are legion. They come to this land of freedom

because the voice of the people is supreme law. But is there perfect freedom in our glorious Republic? Is George Hammond free to act according to reason? Did his reason bring him into the ditch? No; it was his appetite, his weakness. Is that all? Behold, the ewe lambs of the poor are being sacrificed hourly in free Columbia, where the voice of the people is supreme law. David's sentence for sacrificing the poor man's lamb was: "Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house; the sword shall never depart from thine house."

We shrink from viewing the future of our American Government. Unless we change we shall soon stand on the tomb of our independence. Put yourself in a mother's or sister's place, when one more precious than a pearl of great price goes forth to be tempted by ruinous, seductive demons on every hand, and then answer if we are free. There is no safety —not even a city of refuge into which we may fly. It may be a husband, a son or a brother in bondage, and the wail of anguish, the cry for freedom from the reign of King Alcohol goes up on every side. If you believe not what we say, dear reader, go to any city or town and enter those streets where crime and squalid misery abounds. On every side you will see pale, tear stained faces in the bondage of misery, and bloated, swollen faces in the bondage of in-

temperance, all appealing to you for freedom. Fathers, husbands, brothers, and voters from every quarter of our broad, free land, Modenia Hammond, her mother and thousands of others are crying to you for relief. Do not turn a deaf ear to their wail, but in remembrance of those whom your heart holds most dear, never, *never*, NEVER, vote for license again. Think of George Hammond on his midnight train trying to fly from a temptation from which there was no escape. Oh, that his earnest supplication could reach every heart. In the anguish of his soul he cries: "Oh, God, if there be a God, keep me in the hour of temptation—help me to be a man!" Poor slave, will your shackles never be broken? Think, dear reader, when you cast your vote, of the hopes, happiness and prospects that hang thereon and are liable to be blasted or shattered by the casting of that little ballot, and for the sake of those you love, for the good of humanity, for the future welfare of yourself and nation, and for the sake of freedom, VOTE FOR PROHIBITION.

CHAPTER XVI.

LOST TO EARTH, GAINED TO HEAVEN.

"The world recedes, it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! My ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O Grave! where is thy victory?
O Death! where is thy sting?" —*Pope.*

DR. DENESMORE and his beautiful wife might be living in bliss or misery, George Hammond might rise or fall, it mattered not to the inhabitants of the west end of Staunton, and only excited the spiteful comment that the former were stuck-up big-bugs, and the latter no better than other people who didn't try to carry their heads so high. But it is an interesting season at West End. Granny Brown has taken her knitting and gone over to Mrs. Barnes, a thing she has not done for months; but realizing the fact that she had first cited Mark Day to Bill and "Jinney," she thought she would hint to Mrs. Barnes how much they owed her. Besides, it would be very pleasant to communicate what "Hannar had heern to the Hall about that young lawyer goin' to marry Miss

Denesmore." To her chagrin she found that the Barnes knew all about it themselves.

"Bill heerd all about it himself," said his mother, as soon as granny mentioned the subject. "We all think its the best kind o' a match. Both on 'em are so kind, allers rememberin' the pore. I wish we had more sich people." Then lowering her voice she added: "I tell ye, granny, ef there was more such men as Lawyer Strasmore, our men wouldn't drink much longer—he'd make 'em ashamed o' their selves."

"Sam says a man 'ts mean 'nough to git drunk will drink anyhow, an' no 'n can help it," said Granny Brown, with no little emphasis. Mrs. Barnes at last seemed to realize the superiority of the Browns, and granny became quite agreeable. She remained until late, when she declared she must go, as "Sam'l wanted all his folks home at meal time."

There are many like Granny Brown, who go through life grumblers and cynics, because no one seems to realize their superiority. One acknowledging glance might put them in as amiable frame of mind as it did Mrs. Brown. She praised the general favorite of West End, William Strasmore,—said she knew there was nothing common about Miss Denesmore, and slyly told Mrs. Barnes that "Jinney is gittin' right peert lookin'."

In higher circles, as well as among the lowly, Strasmore was a theme for discussion. Sensible parents pointed to him as a model for their growing sons. Only three or four years had he been among them, and unknown and poor, he had reached such a place in his profession that all looked on him in admiration. Only one day more until he was to wed the woman who was dearer to him than all the world beside. Never had a friendly world smiled more promisingly on a coming union.

Pauline was arrayed in her wedding costume just to see how it would fit. It was a dress of white corded silk, long square train, skirt front trimmed with narrow plaitings of the same over drapery, with orange-blossom fringe; tulle veil fastened with a wreath of orange blossoms. Her father, mother and Mark Day, who spent most of his time at Mr. Denesmore's, were called in to admire her costume.

"Maria wouldn't put on all her outfit before her wedding day," said Mark.

"Why?" asked Mrs. Denesmore.

"She said it was bad luck. Wouldn't she be scotching if she knew that I told on her? But I wish you hadn't put on that wreath, Pauline. What if it should be bad luck?"

"It will fail this time, and prove to the superstitious that bad omens are fallible," said Pauline gaily; then, to change the subject, she added:

"So you say, Mark, that Ernest will not be here to-morrow?"

"No! I told him I thought it shabby in him to go off just before your wedding. He said business before pleasure, but on such extra occasions as marriages or funerals, business ought to be set aside." Glancing from the window he saw William Strasmore coming up the walk toward the house, and assuring Pauline that he would be on hand on the morrow, Mark excused himself and left the house. Her father and mother also left the room, that William might meet his bride in her wedding attire alone. She met him, and a smile of pleasure was on the face of her future husband.

"My Pauline!" he said, clasping her in his arms.

In a few moments they were sitting on the sofa, side by side, talking as only lovers can.

"Ernest Day says he cannot be at our wedding," said Pauline.

"Why?"

"He left the city three days ago on business."

"Strange! It's not usual for him to be so engrossed in business. I hope it does not disappoint him, however. Had we not better call on Mrs. Hammond this evening, Pauline?"

"Yes, we had better make them a farewell call? Deena said that she dreaded our two weeks' absence. They have not heard from

George, yet; I am afraid he has fallen again."

"I have strong faith in George's firmness. If there ever was a man who had will power sufficient to resist temptation it is he. But we know there are few who of themselves can resist. I shall not lose faith in him, unless he compels me by his own acts to do so. It is strange that he has not written home—very strange. He may be ill."

"He may, but they have suffered so much from intemperance that they lay every ill to it. It is fearful to contemplate the woe caused by intemperance."

"I know it, Pauline. None are safe while the evil is allowed to exist among us."

Shuddering, the bride-elect said: "If I should see my loved ones going to destruction as Deena has, it would surely break my heart."

"Let us hope, Pauline, that you never may," said William. "But you are to grow stronger through trials and suffering. Often great trials are for the good of humanity, for one never realizes the sorrows of others until placed in the furnace of affliction. This talk is unnecessary, Pauline, for you will only see the shadow of such trials."

"I can make an effort to relieve others without being tried in the furnace. Guy would smile if he heard such sober talk from me. He would want to know who I most feared would

fall, father, you or himself. If ever I have great sorrow it will be I that make it. I fear that my future will be so pleasant that I will forget all about the sorrows of others, and you will be too kind to remind me that I am growing selfish."

"Never fear, Pauline, there's not a selfish trait in the Denesmore family. If there had been much selfishness about Guy, I would have discovered it in our college days. I will go now. I just came to see how my bride would look tomorrow, and to ask you to go with me to Mrs. Hammond's this evening."

When left alone, Pauline, with just the least bit of vanity so natural to woman, surveyed herself again in the mirror and said:

"It's as nice as I could ask. All are pleased with it, and I could not find it in my heart, even if it did not suit me, to quarrel with the poor, little, tired seamstress who has labored so faithfully to please me. What sober thoughts for me to have, and what sober talk for William, on the eve of our wedding, too." She called the seamstress, who was waiting in an adjoining apartment to remove her dress. "Miss Briggs, you may take them off now, if you please. Did you ever hear that it was bad luck for one to have on her wedding outfit before her wedding day?"

"Yes mam, but there is nothing in it. If any-

thing bad does happen, they lay it to that, and if it does'nt happen it's forgotten. You need not worry about it."

"I shall not, for I am not superstitious. Miss Briggs, would you like a vacation before commencing our work for the autumn. Mamma will be very lonesome while I am gone, and if you could stay with her until we return, and walk or drive with her and keep her company, while you rest, it would be so pleasant for her."

Miss Briggs was gratefully surprised, and thanked Miss Pauline very much. Pauline was ready when William came to take her to see Mrs. Hammond and Deena. It was late when they returned, and as William Strasmore sat by her side in the parlor he said:

"There is one beautiful picture before my eyes which will never fade. It is the picture of my bride for to-morrow as she first appeared in her robes."

"I have a jewel of a thought in the knowledge of a true man's love, a love of which no earthly power can deprive me."

"Pauline, do not forget that earth is a power. It is not well to place our affections on an earthly idol. Integrity alone can fortify us for a stormy life."

"Don't talk of a stormy life," said Pauline drawing closer to him. "Why can't we avoid sad topics to-day."

"Because we are thoughtful," he answered with a sad smile. "I must be going now, so think no more of our talk."

He arose, and she followed him to the door. The moon was shining bright and clear, but a few dark clouds were flitting over the face of the sky. He had kissed her good-night and started down the walk, when suddenly he seemed seized by an irresistible impulse, and returning to her side as she stood in the entrance, he clasped her in his warm embrace, and kissed her again and again on lips and forehead, murmuring with unspeakable tenderness:

"May Heaven shield and protect you my darling—my life—my all."

She heard and knew all, but before she could speak he was gone, and she was sitting alone in front of the window watching his retreating figure.

"What does it all mean?" she asked herself with a sigh, and then as the clock in the hall struck midnight she hastily arose and went to her bed-room and was soon in the land of dreams.

Why did William send up a petition for the protection of his beloved Pauline as he imprinted a kiss on her forehead. Did he doubt himself, or was it the admonition from the other and better world, impressing him that she would need his prayers, and the remembrance of his

parting benediction would be a solace in the dark days that were to come. It is well that the veil screening the future cannot be lifted. If Pauline could have seen what the morrow held in store for her, could she have borne it as well as when that morrow came? No, "according to the day is the strength thereof with His own." To-morrow is only the beginning of the sorrowful years which will follow, but "He giveth His beloved rest."

The same impulse which led William back to Pauline's side, caused him to leave the house at a rapid pace. His way led down the avenue and across a common on which still remained a few giant oaks, the last of a once mighty forest, standing far apart like grim sentinels. Did he see that dark form crouching behind one of those great oaks, and did he know that those basilisk eyes had been on him since he had left the house of his intended wife? No. With the prayer still on his lips for the one he loves most dear, he continues on his way. The moon, which has shone in such magnificent splendor all the evening, suddenly hides her face behind a dark cloud as though unwilling to be a witness to the scene which is to follow. As William is passing one of those tall, sentry-like oaks, there is a blinding flash, a sharp, quick report, and with a stifled groan he staggers and falls upon the ground to rise no more. The dark assassin now emerges

from behind the tree, and gazing on his victim, hisses through teeth set with passion:

"One temperance fanatic and one meddling fool less."

Who will say it was not that loving mother, whose memory had ever been fondly cherished by her son, who first welcomed him across the dark river? Was it not her gentle voice that tenderly explained to him the glorious change. The ills of life all passed he had entered into his rest. Was it not at her side he knelt while the great love of his soul poured out a thanksgiving to the Author of his being, that he had at last come to enjoy an eternal existence. The short probation of earth was over and he had entered into an eternal abode with the blest.

The sad moon peeped out from behind the cloud like a frightened creature. A dark form, as motionless as a stone, lay beneath the tree. The hat had rolled away and the wind was gently playing with that auburn hair, growing every moment more damp in the falling dew.

Oh, Pauline—bride of the morrow—how can you sleep so sweetly and peacefully on your downy bed, when he, whom you love dearer than life, lies so cold and rigid on the bare earth, out there alone.

CHAPTER XVII.

AT THE HOME OF HIS CHILDHOOD.

"Here first remembered be the joyous band,
Who hailed him chief, obedient to command,
Who joined with him in every boyish sport,
Their first adviser and their last resort."

—*Byron.*

FROM a sweet refreshing sleep Pauline awoke on the morning that was to be her wedding day. She arose, made a hasty toilet, and kneeling by her bedside said her prayers. Then arising she went to the window and drew the curtain aside and looked out upon the beautiful world. The sun, which had risen an hour or more, was shining in all its splendor, as she looked out upon the lawn and grove where the mocking-birds dwelt. She tried to banish the sad presentiments which would occasionally steal over her.

"This is unnatural for me," she said to herself pressing her face against the window-pane. "I am usually light-hearted. Why is this? I wish Willie was here! I declare, I am trembling, and I wonder what makes me do so. I will go

to mother, for I must not be so nervous when it's to be our wedding day."

Her heart almost stilled its beating at this moment for she heard sounds of alarm and excitement below. Was it reality or was it only her fancy, for she was sure she heard some one sobbing. Her heart wildly beating and her breath coming by short gasps at the certainty of some impending evil, she hastened down below. A cloud of anguish was about to hover over the pathway of the pure and innocent Pauline. She went to her mother's room with all the calmness she could assume, but neither of her parents were there. With mingled doubts and fears she ran to the sitting-room, and after casting one glance on the tear-stained faces within, she sank with a groan upon a seat near the door. Her mother, Maria and Miss Briggs were weeping violently, and her father, who sat by the window, had his face buried in his hands. Guy hastened to her side, and starting to her feet she wildly exclaimed:

"What is it, Guy? Oh! tell me!"

Very tenderly her brother led her back to the sofa, and seating himself at her side, while he held both her hands in his, he said:

"Sister, a great sorrow is waiting for you; we all pity you, poor little girl—but the burden of this grief you must bear alone. Can you bear it bravely?"

Her eyes wandered from one to another; every particle of color had left her face, and yet when she spoke her voice had an alarming calmness about it.

"I can bear it," she said. "Anything is better than this suspense. This is of William. Tell me all, Guy—what has happened him?" What did she suspect had happened him—what could she suspect? Certainly she did not realize the worst. Drawing her toward him, in as gentle a tone as he could, her brother said:

"Pauline—sister, your noble William is dead."

A piercing scream rang through the room, she started up as if stricken by a death throe, and sank unconscious into her brother's arms. It was but a slight swoon, however, for she soon recovered and lay pale and motionless on her brother's shoulder, but no other sound escaped her lips and her eyes were as yet tearless. After a few moments she spoke in a faint whisper, and asked her brother to tell her all. Guy told all he knew of the tragedy, which was a very meagre account, as the assassin had escaped and nothing was known of him or his motive. She listened with a calmness far more terrible than the most violent grief. After a few moments silence, broken only by the sobs of the weeping women, she asked:

"Have you telegraphed to Mr. Johns?"

"I have," he answered.

"That is well. We intended going there on our bridal tour, but we will go there any way. It will be quite different from what we intended, but Willie shall be laid to rest by his mother's side. Will you go with us?"

"Yes, Pauline, I will be with you, and will attend to all. But this shock I see is too much for you; you must let me lead you back to your chamber, where you can rest in quiet."

She consented to be taken back to her room, but the feelings and emotions which seemed at that dark hour to crush her young life are beyond description. In her room she gazed about in stony silence. Oh, if she was only now as when she left that apartment to go below. Could it all be true? Might it not possibly be some horrid dream? No! no! it was a sad, a terrible reality. She was silent, and paid no attention to the many questions propounded to her. No tears, no words,—nothing but a stony, silent grief.

Her brother was at her side, but all his tender words could not move her to tears. The day passed in gloom and sorrow. It was the first gloomy day the Denesmores had ever known, and was in reality the darkest of their lives. They watched by the couch of their loved one, who seemed a breathing corpse. At times she closed her eyes, and at others gave a glassy

stare at those around her. Guy's scientific investigation was of no avail. Three or four of the best physicians were called in consultation, and quiet was recommended

Late in the evening Deena Hammond was announced and shown up to the room where the poor, stricken creature lay. Deena was quite overcome with the change wrought by a few short hours. Pauline evidently heard her sobs, for she turned her face toward her.

"Oh, Pauline! 'tis hard, I know 'tis hard, to part with him; but to you is given the precious privilege of weeping for him." A tear, the first she had yet shed, was now seen trickling down her cheek, and a moment later others followed, chasing each other rapidly down her marble face, while convulsive sobs began to heave her breast.

"My God! did one ever witness such grief before!" said Guy aside to a brother physician, who had remained in charge of the case. After a few moments' weeping and sobbing, Pauline spoke, her voice expressing a deeper woe than can possibly be described.

"Oh, Deena! it's such a blessing to weep for him. He said that we were often tried in the furnace of affliction and found solace in trying to relieve others. Heaven grant that I may find strength to carry out the blessed work he has begun."

They wept together and talked of the dear departed until midnight; and then, by the administration of narcotics, Pauline fell asleep and Deena stole quietly away. During the night arrangements were made to convey the body of William Strasmore to its last resting place.

* * * * * * *

All was bustle and generous excitement at the home of William Strasmore's foster parents. All was joy at the expected return of William with his new bride. The news of the wedding had spread all over the neighborhood, and the many who had known William only to love him, were looking forward with pleasure to the time when they would see him again. All his former friends were invited, and his coming marriage revived the bygone days of his and their childhood. William was a favorite among the boys and girls, and his coming back home with a young and handsome bride was an anticipated pleasure.

The pretty Mrs. Bloomer, still young, though she had been a wife nine years, and a mother seven, was busily engaged with her sewing, while her mind went back to the days when she, a little girl, played with William Strasmore, and blushed even yet at the recollection of being called his little sweetheart. She remembered how spunky John Bloomer grew at such assertions, and recalled many an incident which gave her pleasure and pain. She remembered

most distinctly the night William Strasmore walked home with her from spelling-school, and praised his friend, John Bloomer, and told Belinda she could never possess the love of a better, truer man than he. She felt a disappointment at the time, but after William was fairly out of the way, concluded that his advice was the best, and decided to take it. She found that William had spoken truly, for a better, truer man than John Bloomer never lived.

At this moment Mrs. Bloomer's little girl came into the room with a rush, leaving the door open behind her, and throwing her cape in one corner of the room, her bonnet in the other, and dropping her dinner basket in the center, with eyes sparkling with excitement, began:

"Say, ma! can't I go with you to Mr. Johns'? I'll wash all the dishes, peel the 'taters, pick up chips, and rock the cradle without cryin' for two weeks. Charley Jones says it 'll be 's good as a circus, 'cause they 're goin' to have a long table set, with a live-roasted stuffed turkey an' a pig in the centre o' the table, and I've never seen a circus, or a live turkey stuffed, neither; and they are goin' to have a bride's cake, and I never saw a bride's cake. Say, ma! can I go, please?"

"Do be quiet, child, you've made me stick my finger with the needle."

"Helloa!" called a voice from the front gate.

"There's Charley Jones now on Mr. Johns' horse," said Mrs. Bloomer, "wonder what he wants?" The little girl, followed by her mother, went to the front gate.

"There haint goin' to be no infair at Mr. Johns', Miss Bloomer," cried Charley, his eyes expressive of excitement. "Their son Will's dead'n some one's goin' to bring him here to bury him by his mother. Mr. Johns sent me here to see if Mr. Bloomer 'd go for that preacher that Will used to like."

"Yes, yes. Oh, Willie! Willie dead!" cried Mrs. Bloomer, leaning against the gate for support.

* * * * * * *

It was a dismal day when Guy Denesmore, in charge of the remains, got off at the little depot nearest Mr. Johns. A hearse and long procession of wagons and carriages were awaiting their arrival. It was two miles to the quiet, unpretentious country church, at which William, when a very little child, had first learned to worship God. Wagons, vehicles and horsemen joined the procession, until it became a large one, when they reached the church.

The funeral text was, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Psa. 37:37. The minister was one of those unassuming yet impressive men, whose sermons dwell long in the hearts of his hearers.

There was no effort at either rhetorical or oratorical display. After alluding to the noble character of the deceased, he sketched in a rapid manner his early childhood, vicissitudes and trials, and then mentioned his strong religious nature and his consecration to the cause of temperance. No one ever associated with William Strasmore without feeling better for having done so. His life bears testimony to the fulfillment of the promise "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." The good man's house was always kept in order, so that when at an unexpected hour, in the vigor of life and dawn of manhood and usefulness, death claimed him without a moment's warning, it was well with his soul. He alluded to the dark crime which had deprived this world and these friends of the usefulness of William Strasmore. It was yet a mystery, and surmise at most could say it was some revengeful fanatic, driven crazy by intoxication, who in a fit of frenzy had destroyed the very man who would save him. William Strasmore only added one more to the many martyrs who had given up their lives for humanity. This death would react against the rumseller more than a thousand lecturers in the field. Most feelingly did he allude to the young, beautiful and accomplished betrothed of the deceased. "Next day he was to have wed one in every way worthy to be his

wife; but his bride was death. She is prostrated with grief and horror, and unable to accompany the remains of one whom she holds dearer than her own life, to the grave. While we are all bowed down with grief at the loss of one so grand and noble, cut down in the flower of his manhood, we have the comforting assurance, that beyond this land of woe and disappointment, William Strasmore has entered into that land of eternal peace, where night never comes. Oh that the comforting word of grace may find its way to the heart of his mourning bride, and may she look forward with bright hopes and anticipations to that day, when she will join him in that celestial city not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens; and dwell with the Lord forever and ever."

The funeral sermon was deep and impressive in its simplicity, and at the conclusion there was scarcely a dry eye in the audience.. As Guy Denesmore heard the clods fall upon the coffin of his friend who was to have been his brother, it seemed like the tolling of his own death bell. "Earth to earth, and dust to dust." Oh, how all stood with hushed voices around that rapidly filling grave. What a dark hour it must be to the skeptic as he hears that sound, and from the depths of his infidel reasoning, says: "That is all. There is nothing beyond. All is dark despair; there is no joy, not a ray of hope."

"Will you go now, doctor?" asked a voice at the side of Dr. Denesmore. He started from that painful reverie into which he had fallen and gazed about him. The grave was almost filled, and the people had nearly all gone away. He paused but a moment to gaze upon the marble slab which bore the name of William's mother. The story of her sufferings, trials and heroic death was known to him, and now the sight of that plain marble slab seemed to impress him with a strange awe. As he went away, Guy sighed:

"Oh, William! it is hard to leave you here. Poor Pauline! dark indeed must be the world to her."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ALONE.

"Away! ye know that tears are rain,
That death nor heeds, nor hears distress;
Will this unteach us to complain,
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou—who tells me to forget
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet."

—*Byron.*

When Pauline awoke from the sleep in which Deena had left her, she was at first unconscious of what had happened. There was a heavy sorrow at her heart, a deep, uneasy dread, but just what it was she knew not. She rose to a sitting posture, and then as the awful reality of what had happened came over her with crushing weight, she threw herself back on her pillow, crying:

"Oh, Willie! Willie! I am alone, all alone!"

For an hour she lay convulsed with silent grief, then for the first time since she had received that terrible shock, she felt a strong desire to gaze upon the beloved form, and hold the hand in hers. This desire gained in strength until she rose from her bed, and in wrapper and slippers with only a light shawl thrown over her shoulders,

she left the room and glided noiselessly down the stairway. She knew the room in which he lay. Softly opening the door she entered as if he slept and she feared to wake him. The gas was turned down low, but she saw the casket at the farther side of the room, and, as she wished it might be, the lid was off.

"Oh, Willie! darling Willie, I have come at last," she said, and kneeling by his side she kissed his marble-like brow, while her tears fell fast upon that white, dead face, and she began talking as if she were in his presence:

"Oh, Willie! dear Willie, 'tis hard to give you up, but I will try to bear this burden as bravely as you said I must. It is a duty we owe to others to bear our sorrows in silence, and to try to relieve the sufferings of others. Even while I feel so lonely and desolate, I will try for the sake of others who may suffer, to be cheerful. I will in all things do as you would wish." Raising from her knees, she kissed the face which she had uncovered when she reached his side.

"Dear, darling Willie, if I could know that you were near me in the years which are to come. You said that sometimes you felt the presence of your dead mother. Oh! can you not in spirit be with me all the time?"

The watchers at this moment entered again, and found her bending over him, the great grief of her heart bursting forth in convulsive sobs.

Their hearts were touched, for never had they beheld a more touching scene.

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Three weeks have passed since William Strasmore was buried. The excitement which his murder had created, had somewhat abated. His name is seldom mentioned in the Denesmore home. With Pauline the subject is too sacred, while others fear to wound her feelings by alluding to it. He is deeply mourned by all. Pauline in spirit is ever kneeling at the far away grave, and each moment of her waking hours is spent in thought of the dear departed. Who was his assassin, and what the cause of his assassination?

Mr. Denesmore in his study was turning the question over in his mind, what could he do to bring back the bloom to his daughter's cheek? Day by day the fond father had seen his child grow weaker and paler. Would not travel and change of scenery effect the cure he desired? While he was still thinking, Pauline entered his study, and seating herself on a low stool at his feet, placed her arm on his knees, and rested her cheek upon it. Both were silent, but a sigh escaping from her burdened heart, told how deeply she felt the woe that had fallen upon her.

"Father, it is wrong I know, for me to keep you all miserable. I have so often resolved to be brave and give this up, but we know not how weak we are until we are placed in the crucible.

A shadow seems to have fallen on my once happy life, and crushed out all joy forever."

"My dear child," said her father, drawing her upon his knee as he had done when she was a little girl, and placing her head against his shoulder; "we must do something for you. How would you like to travel? Your mother and I think it would be the very thing. You need a change of scene."

"You are very kind, papa, but I must not think of travel now. I used to enjoy it, but there is a change of scene nearer home, which will not only benefit me, but others as well. Guy has just told me that Mrs. Hammond is very ill. I told him to come after me when he went there this afternoon, and I would go with him. That will be a change, father. I leave my own quiet home and enter one made desolate by intemperance. Father, I believe that unfortunate family have greater God-given faculties than we. While we have always been happy, they have only realized happiness as a dream. They have long been a prey to humanity's worst foe, of which we know nothing save as the result seen in others."

"Will it not make you more despondent to go there?"

"No, no father; I will gain strength by their misfortunes. I never had any patience with a drunkard until I became interested in Modenia and George Hammond; then I put myself in her

place, and thought were it my father and brother, would not I be patient. In bringing them home to myself, I lost my contempt for the drunkard. Every drunkard is a father, son, brother or husband, and there is some good in his nature. In fact, father, many of the noblest and best of our land fall victims to *The Worst Foe.* The destroyer is placed before us, not as a destroyer, nor does the victim realize what a fearful step he is taking when he drinks his first glass. Why can not the voter be more thoughtful and silentlv destroy this evil?"

"I don't want you to think on this subject, my dear. You might spend all your life in trying to put down intemperance and never effect any change. Your eloquence might as well be spent on the desert, for all the good you will ever accomplish. Don't excite yourself about the drunkard or the voter, lest you take burdens upon your shoulders which you will never be able to throw off. Do as your mother and I have done—drop a seed when and where you can, which will bring forth good fruit, but do not try to change the destiny of nations."

"I have heard you say, father, that you wanted your children to be better than their parents. Here may be a chance for progression. You have only sowed in fertile ground; we are told to 'sow by all waters.' You want the color to return to my cheek, and you think of me travel-

ing for change of scene; but let me seek that change at home, where earnest hearts and willing hands are needed."

"Have it as you will, my dear; but I shall feel better when the color has returned to your cheek, and I can see a smile once more on your face."

When alone in her room, Pauline opened her Bible. Her eyes first rested on the following passage:

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." She rose to her feet and going to the window repeated to herself, "I will fear no evil. I shall enter the valley of the shadow of death, when I go to Mrs. Hammond's—the very worst of the valleys of death; for of all, the one shadowed by the vice of strong drink is the darkest; yet my work and mission shall be there and I will fear no evil."

Dear readers, how many of you are ready like Pauline Denesmore, to consecrate yourselves to the cause of temperance, and enter with her into the valley of the shadow of death caused by the blighting breath of King Alcohol. Have you, like Pauline, so far, only lived in the sunshine of prosperity? Then, like her, put yourself in Modenia's place, remembering the evil monster may enter your home and snatch loved ones away. Don't be content as was Mr. Denesmore, with sowing only in fertile ground.

Pauline found Mrs. Hammond very feeble. Guy said that death was liable at any moment to claim its victim. Pauline told Guy she would stay with the stricken family until late in the evening, when they could send the carriage for her. Laying aside her costly wraps, she set about her work to lessen as far as possible the misery of the poor sufferer. Nor were her efforts in vain. As is always the case, heart responded to heart in efforts put forth with the purest and truest motives in relieving the pain of others. She soon quieted Lillie to sleep, and rendered valuable aid to toil- and care-worn Modenia. Taking her seat by the side of the sick woman, she soothed her sufferings the best she could. When the dying woman spoke of her absent son, Pauline talked hopefully of him.

"I very much fear he has gone down, down again," said the invalid feebly. "He has been silent so long."

"Put your trust in God, Mrs. Hammond, and remember that 'not a sparrow shall fall to the ground without your Father,'" said Pauline cheerfully. "George has good in his nature—more good than evil, we all know—you pray for him always, and we none of us cease to pray for him. Will not our prayers be answered."

"Oh, child!" sighed the heart-broken woman, "if it were any other temptation than intemperance, I might have some hope. But, oh, I

know the powers of such a temptation where the tempter stands smiling and inviting at every corner. 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"

"And I know if we aid ourselves, God will aid us," said Pauline hopefully. "This curse will not always be in our land. You may not live to see it; I may not; but the generations which follow will reap a rich harvest of love and peace from what we have sown in tears. Do you find no comfort in the thought?"

"Yes, yes, there is comfort in thinking of the future. But my boy, my poor, deluded child! will he know that he was never from his mother's mind from the time she held him in her arms, a sweet, prattling babe. I loved him then, but I love him more since his fall, for he needs my love. I guarded him, watched him and prayed for him. When he grew to manhood, and was so pure and unspotted right in the midst of temptations, how proud I was of him. I thought, though all the world should fall, my George is safe."

"But we have learned, Mrs. Hammond, that none are safe. Eternal vigilance alone is the price of safety. Let us talk no more, for you are weak. If ever I hear of George Hammond, I shall use all my feeble efforts in his behalf, and if he has fallen, he shall be saved, be he ever so low in the stagnant pool of sin and degradation."

When Pauline rose to go, Mrs. Hammond insisted on her coming again on the morrow. "We need you so much," the dying woman feebly said. "You bring such joy, such cheerfulness and peace."

She promised, and kissing the pale, shrunken features, was gone. Deena Hammond stood gazing after her, then turning to her mother, said:

"Poor Pauline! she has suffered keenly as well as ourselves, but her sorrow has only given a sweeter, mellower influence to her love, which was always abundant."

Pauline had kept up well while in the presence of others, but when in her carriage the old grief that had for three weeks held her in deepest despair seized upon her, and she sobbed:

"Oh, Willie, Willie! how I miss you! You were with me the last time, to lead in the utterance of words of cheer and hope. But now I am alone! Oh, God! can I endure this loneliness? I must weep alone. The world has its share of sorrow and cannot take a part of my burden. I must carry comfort to the afflicted, aid to the needy and improve each golden hour. The time will soon come when I can join you in that beautiful world where night never comes."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HAMMONDS.

"'Twas then, the studious head, or generous mind,
Follower of God, or friend of human kind,
Poet or Patriot, rose but to restore
The faith and moral, nature gave before:
The less or greater, set so justly true,
That touching one, must strike the other, too."

—*Pope.*

NEVER had Pauline's time been more profitably spent than during the week following the events recorded in our last chapter. Profitably to herself, for seeing the misery and suffering of others, she was called away from the great sorrow which burdened her own heart; and certainly profitable to others, for many weary souls will bless her to their dying day. And when from the Just Rewarder she shall hear the glad words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into my joy"—"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me," that peace which passeth understanding will enter her soul to endure forever. Pauline administered to the wants of many who were sick, and in poverty and distress, but

most of her time was spent at Mrs. Hammond's bedside. Her parents feared she was overtaxing herself, but Guy said:

"Let her alone; it will do her good," and they quietly awaited the outcome of her labors.

"Can nothing be done to find George?" Mrs. Hammond asked Dr. Denesmore and his sister, who were at her bedside.

"I know of nothing more that can be done, Mrs. Hammond," said Dr. Denesmore sadly. "He started to Omaha, and I have written to a friend there concerning him. He has visited the hospitals, but none of them show the registration of George Hammond. He was registered at a hotel, but only for one day. That is as far as we have been able to learn anything of him."

The poor woman lay for a few moments breathing with difficulty. Deep down in her throat could already be heard the warning rattle. At last she raised her eyes which were rapidly growing glassy, and in a whisper said:

"Doctor, can I last long?"

"No, Mrs. Hammond. Do not be frightened, for you must know you are soon to die," said the doctor.

She merely nodded her head and then while a moisture gathered in her eyes, faintly said:

"My poor children—poor Deena and Lillie."

"Do not worry about them, Mrs. Hammond, for they will be taken care of," said the doctor.

"You must not try to talk now, for you are too weak." Then whispering to his sister to remain with the patient until he could send a nurse, the doctor stole from the apartment. The eyes of the dying woman closed, and her breathing became every moment more and more difficult. Pauline was watching the rapid change coming over her countenance, when she heard the unsteady step of the intoxicated husband and father. Never had she had such a trial before. In his maudlin, drunken manner, the inebriate told his dying wife to get up; that she was better, and had not Pauline interceded, and called Deena to her aid, he would have dragged her to the floor. But they got him to bed in an adjoining room, where he soon fell asleep. The angel of death had spread his dark wings and was even at that moment hovering over the household. The drunkard did not realize that she whom he had promised to protect, love and cherish, in sickness and health, was at death's door, and because of his cruelty, really welcomed the dark messenger. Will he ever awake from that drunken slumber to remorse and agony? He was once a kind husband and an indulgent father, but alcohol had transformed him to a demon.

His was the same old, old story, so often told that it has long since lost its interest. He took the social glass, and when his wife remonstrated, remembered that it was not becoming in man to

yield to woman. The devil kept whispering in his ear to be a man and not become a henpecked husband. He drank then more to annoy the woman he professed to love than for any other purpose. He would teach her not to interfere with his liberty, and while ruining himself, and destroying her happiness, he thought himself the most injured man in the world. She pined away; but the demon ever attributed it to her obstinacy, and he grew to almost hate the woman whom he had loved dearer than life. His tempter called him wise, and he smiled at the flattery. From bad to worse he continued his downward course, until he was the bloated sot we find him. His children were ashamed to acknowledge that he was their father. Many a time had they blushed and hung their little heads when they heard his drunken folly recounted. When they grew to years of maturity they would have hated the author of their being, had not their patient mother said:

"Love your father for what he was, and pity him for what he is. The law places the temptation before him and by doing so says, 'Drink, it is honorable, we have made it legal.'"

Those hours of watching seemed long to Pauline, for her brother failed to get a nurse, and she was compelled to remain alone with the dying woman. Mark Day, who had heard that Mrs. Hammond was very ill, came to this house of

misery. He softly entered the room, and coming to Pauline's side, said in a whisper:

"Is she very sick?"

"Yes, very."

Mrs. Hammond's senses, quickened perhaps by the coming change, were active. She opened her eyes, and in a feeble voice asked:

"Is it George?"

"No, Mrs. Hammond, it is Mark Day," said Pauline so sweetly and gently, that her voice seemed to soothe the dying woman.

"I thought it was George come back." Then she again closed her eyes and the death rattle in her throat increased. Mark sighed, and left the room. Deena sat weeping softly near her dying mother, while little Lillie, not realizing the great loss she was soon to sustain, was asleep. The drunken snore of the father sounded cruel and heartless to the lonely watchers. When he awakes will he at last come to realize what has happened?

When all was over, the inebriate, as if disturbed by some supernatural element or the loud sobbing of the two girls, awoke and came out into the room. One glance at the white, still form on the bed, and the young lady dressed in black, who was closing the once bright eyes he had loved so well, told him all was over.

"What is it Deena?" he asked, while a shudder passed through his frame.

"Oh, father! she suffers no longer."

"No, no! young woman, what has happened?" asked the almost distracted man, now wild with remorse.

"Mr. Hammond," said Pauline as gently as if she were talking to her own father, "your wife has paid the great debt of nature. She has laid down her burden of life and entered into that eternal rest which is in store for the good. *She is dead.*"

He staggered, for he had received a blow that would last through life, and with one piercing cry, as though it were the pent-up agony of years, fell insensible upon the floor.

* * * * * * *

After her mother was laid to rest, and her father was sufficiently recovered from the delirium tremens into which he was plunged, on the announcement of his wife's death, Modenia's whole energies were bent on his redemption. She scarcely allowed him from her sight. She accompanied him wherever he went, and stood by his side while he was combating temptation. He knew he would yield were it not for his daughter, for long years of dissipation had weakened Joseph Hammond, both physically and mentally.

Deena knew that she could not always be at her father's side. There must at some time be a relaxing of vigilance, and then the father would

fall. *The Worst Foe* lurked always near, and was ever watchful; and the moment an opportu nity afforded itself, would seize upon him and drag him to destruction. George's plan of going west, where in some rural district they might find a place free from temptation, came forcibly upon her. Might they not do so yet? Her father's energies had been so weakened by his long life of dissipation, that he would be an invalid all the remainder of his life, but she was strong and young, and possessed sufficient education to teach a primary or advanced school. She could also take a music class, providing no school could be obtained. Kansas, the young and growing state, had already made a record on the side of temperance, and she turned her attention in that direction.

She mentioned her plan to Dr. Denesmore, and he promised to see what he could do for her. He remembered that he had a college friend named Arthur Templeton, who lived in some small town in Kansas. He knew Arthur was a good, whole-souled fellow, capable of any good act of friendship, and he wrote him a letter stating Miss Deena Hammond's case, and asking his assistance for herself and family.

The answer came promptly, and was favorable. There were no saloons in the village where he lived, and the sentiment of the entire city was for prohibition. It would be some months be-

here there would be a vacancy in the village schools, but Mr. Templeton would secure a school for Miss Hammond in the country. As Guy folded the letter he said:

"It is the very thing for the Hammonds to do. Let me see: Modenia is good looking, and Arthur a tender-hearted old bachelor! well, no one knows what may grow out of all this yet."

Accompanied by Pauline, to whom the joy of bearing good news helped to lighten her own burden, he went that evening to the home of the Hammonds. Deena was so delighted that color actually came to her pale cheek again.

"A new and better life is before us," she said. When they had disposed of their small property and scant effects, Pauline, finding that Deena's means were still limited, placed a few bills in her hand, saying:

"Take this, Deena, it is only loaned, and the interest asked is that you do not pay it until you can spare it without injury to yourself."

Modenia found it no easy matter to part from her old home. Accompanied by her imbecile father and little sister, she set out for her new home in the great West. As she was whirled on for hours and days by the speeding train, her thoughts would revert to her old home at Staunton.

"I must not think of Staunton," she said to herself, "my thoughts must be beyond."

CHAPTER XX.

THE FIRST GLASS.

Accuse not nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
Of wisdom ; she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou needst her sigh.

—Milton.

SWIFTLY the days speed into weeks and the weeks into months. Dr. Denesmore and his wife spent the first year of their married life with Mr. Day. Guy had intended to purchase an elegant home of his own, but it did not suit Maria, who detested anything like the labor of housekeeping, and she prevailed on him to live for a few months with her father. Maria had always had her way, and she bid fair to rule her husband in this.

The summer passed, and autumn followed, then came winter with icy fetters and coats of snow. It was New Year's day, and Pauline was sitting in the parlor, when Mark Day suddenly entered in his usual noisy, boisterous, excited manner and said:

"Miss Pauline, I've got the dapple grays and my new cutter at the gate. You just ought to

see them. I know you'll like them better 'n ever if you'll come with me for a drive. There is no need in you staying in here all day, for its just splendid sleighing. Will you go with me?"

Pauline's first impulse was to decline, but on reflection she decided to go, more for Mark's sake than her own. Then, might not the bracing air have a salutary effect upon her?

"Yes, Mark, I will go with you; but where is Guy? It is the first time since I can remember, that he was not first to give me a New Year's greeting. But it is now the middle of the afternoon and he has not been here yet."

"He is at home. Maria and he receive their friends to-day."

"I will just tell mother I am going, get my wraps, and we will go."

The boy waited in the hall, whistling a merry tune until his Sunday School teacher appeared, and then he conducted her to his sleigh. Mark was an experienced horseman, and boy as he was, could manage a pair of fiery animals with almost a man's skill. What is more animating to the despondent, than riding in the pure, open air, while the hoofs of the free, yet gentle animals play an accompaniment to the chime of the bells, and the eye beholds the beauties of nature. When winter has thrown a mantle of snow over all, the body feels the invigoration of the pure, health-laden atmosphere, and sad forebodings

and sorrowful memories are driven from the mind. This, like all fleeting pleasure which for many make the probation on earth bearable, can only be enjoyed for a short space of time, then we are called back to the realities of life. Pauline entered as much into the enjoyment of the hour, as the boy at her side.

"Let's go and call on your brother and Maria, Miss Denesmore," said Mark when they had driven considerable distance out into the country. "We can call around there for a moment."

Pauline agreed with his proposal, and Mark turned his horses toward home. As Pauline tripped up the broad stone steps which led to the house, something of the old expression of health and happiness came over her face, and shone from her bright, sparkling eyes. Mark took her to the rear parlor, giving as his excuse for doing so, that Guy and Maria had company in the front parlor, and perhaps she would not want to go in there.

"No, Mark," she answered, "I will just wait here until brother is at a moment's leisure, and then you can call him in. I do not wish to be with company, but will greet him and Maria here, and go home."

Mark went into the front parlor where was assembled the gay callers. There was a room between the front and rear parlor—a large drawing-room, and the door being partially drawn

FIRST GLASS.

"With her own small, white hand she filled a glass with wine, and holding it up, said: 'Come, Guy, drink this.'"—Page 193.

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back, Pauline saw a long table in the centre of the room, on which were bottles and decanters, glasses, cakes and other refreshments. She had not been waiting many minutes, when she saw Maria enter this room leaning on Guy's arm, followed by several ladies and gentlemen. They came to the table on which were such refreshments as might be expected at the Days'.

"Now, Doctor, let us drink the health of these ladies," said one of the gentlemen callers.

Dr. Denesmore smiled, but made no answer.

"The doctor has never drank a glass of wine with me yet," said Mrs. Denesmore, as she noticed her husband's hesitation. With her own small white hand, she filled a glass with wine, and holding it up, said: "Come, Guy, drink this. You do not know how pleasant it is to the taste. Much better than some of the nostrums you administer to your patients."

What man in the presence of gay friends could resist such a temptation offered by the hand of one he loved dearer than life? Guy took the glass in an unsteady hand, and said something to the gentlemen, then glasses clinked, and to her horror Pauline saw her brother take his first glass. She tried to speak to prevent him, but she seemed powerless. She started up, but strength failed her, and she sank back in her seat unable to move. She bowed her head on the arm of the sofa, and there Mark found her. He

had hoped she had not seen Guy, but her attitude convinced him she had. The boy was at his wit's ends to know what to do. He scratched his head, and wished he had never brought her there. At last he said:

"The doctor's got so much company, Miss Denesmore, that I expect we'd better wait no longer."

"No, Mark, we will go," said Pauline, raising her head. Boy as he was, Mark Day's perceptive faculties were keen, and he could not but contrast her pale face and downcast eyes, with the happy features he had left there but a few moments before. Guy's first glass had been witnessed by his sister. Silently they passed from the house which they had entered, unobserved. Mark knew Pauline's heart was almost breaking, and refrained from mentioning a subject which was causing his Sunday School teacher so much pain. They rode home in silence, and at the door Pauline said:

"Mark, do not mention this to father or mother."

Mark bowed, and as he rode back home in his cutter, he said:

"Only his first glass, but if he can be persuaded to take one, can he not be persuaded to drink more? It made Pauline look like a ghost. I wish we hadn't gone there. It seems that I do everything wrong. I hope this will be Guy's

last glass, though I've heard 'em say every man gets on a spree once in a lifetime. Strasmore never would if he'd a lived a hundred years. Some called him a fanatic, but I wish two-thirds of the world was of that kind of fanatics. Guy is a good fellow, but I am afraid he is not as strong as Strasmore was, and I wish he hadn't taken that first glass."

Pauline, determined to keep the humiliating knowledge from her mother, entered her room, where she found a letter lying on her table which had been brought by the postman during her absence. It was from Modenia Hammond, and hoping that it would have a tendency to relieve her mind, she opened it and read:

"DEAREST FRIEND:—The labors of the day ended, I find my chief pleasure in writing to you. I am delighted with my free home in the West, which in this particular locality is free indeed—free from the curse of strong drink. Oh, my dear friend, no one free from the burden of that curse, can know the happiness conveyed by those words. The very atmosphere seems filled with this freedom. Dr. Denesmore's friend, Mr. Templeton, has proven himself a gentleman and a friend, well deserving the confidence which the doctor places in him. After we were established in our comfortable home, I found that all arrangements had been made by Mr. Templeton much better than I could have made them myself. My school progresses well, and if mother

and George were only here, I could almost be happy. Write soon without fail.

As ever your friend,

DEENA."

Pauline sat for a long time in a painful reverie, with the letter lying in her lap. She at last rose with a sigh, and lighted the gas, for the room had grown dark. The recollection of what she had seen was constantly in her mind, though she kept repeating: "It will end there. Guy will never be a drunkard. He will never do so again." Her last thought after retiring was:

"It was his first, it will be his last." No sleep would have come to her eyes that night had she seen her brother's giddy movements, or heard the coarse, rude jest. Surely that man could not be the refined Dr. Denesmore who had only been known as a gentleman until now. It did not stop with the first nor the second glass. No one, save Mark, made an effort to stop him till his brain was in a whirl, and his actions had become idiotic. Then Ernest, ashamed of him, led him away and put him to bed.

"It's always the case, father," he said. "Let a boy be taught temperance, and you will make a drunkard out of him. If you don't want to raise drunkards, never try to teach them such silly nonsense. But Doc. is'nt to blame; he is a jolly good fellow, and will get over this in time."

Next morning Pauline found herself nervous and restless. Guy's first glass was constantly in her mind. Although she thought it would bring no harm to him, she kept repeating:

"It was his first. but it will also be nis last glass."

So strong became the impulse to know something about him, that she concluded to make a morning call on her brother. She had the horses harnessed to her cutter and was soon at Mr. Day's house. The servant said none of the family was up except Mark.

"Guy not up, and it eleven o'clock," she said to herself. She was sitting in the parlor hesitating whether to go or remain, when Mark Day came in the room silent and sad. She missed his merry whistle, and knew in a moment that something was wrong.

"Good morning, Miss Denesmore, is'nt it early for you to be out?" he asked.

"Early! it is eleven o'clock, Mark, and they say Guy is not up yet. I never knew him to sleep so late before."

Mark excused his tardiness in rising by saying: "Some friends remained until late in the evening, and I guess he has overslept himself," but at the same time he avoided Pauline's eye.

"Mark, tell me, did Guy drink any more last evening?"

"It's too bad Miss Denesmore, but you know

it's the second day of the New Year, and—and Guy's not well, that's all," he stammered, after a moment's hesitation. For a while the poor girl stood trembling with a terrible apprehension, and then she said:

"Take me to his room, Mark."

After a moment's reflection, Mark answered: "I will speak to him, probably he would rather see you here."

"Mark, was it the wine that made Guy sick?"

"Well, no, not exactly. The wine led to it. It was the mixed drinks stronger than wine, and making a regular night of it."

Guy was very much displeased with himself, and he was not only sick in body, but at heart. There was a gnawing of conscience which made him feel ill at ease. His head throbbed with pain and when he was informed his sister wanted to see him, he attempted to rise, but his head was still in a whirl, his stomach nauseated, and he was forced to lie down again. Finding that it would be impossible for him to rise, he consented to have Pauline come to his room. As Mark closed the door behind him, Guy thought:

"What a fool I have been; put a blot on my name! disgraced myself! Been on a drunk! how does it sound? How will my friends like it? My parents will not be proud of me any more, and poor Pauline, it will almost kill her. She is so sensitive on such things."

He turned his face to the wall as Pauline entered. For the first time in his life he did not want to see his sister, or any one. Pauline came to his bedside, and in a voice which trembled with suppressed emotion, said:

"I called to see you yesterday, Guy, and waited sometime in the back parlor for you to be at liberty. I wanted to say 'Happy New Year.'"

"It was too bad; what time were you here?" asked Guy, still keeping his face averted.

"About three o'clock. Does your head ache, brother?" she asked, placing her hand across his forehead.

"It is better now," he answered. "But Pauline, why did you not wait until you could speak to me yesterday?"

"I could not stay after what I saw," she answered, while tears started from her eyes.

"What did you see, Pauline," he asked, with a desperate effort at innocence.

"I saw you take your first glass, Guy, and I learned this morning what followed. Oh, Guy! try to outlive it, and I hope it may be the last. I blame myself that I did not go to your side yesterday and take the glass from your hand."

"Do not blame yourself. It was my own weakness that was at fault, but you can rest assured that this is the last. I hope that neither father nor mother will hear of it, and I do not

think they will. Father never goes where drinking carousals are discussed, and no one would be so heartless as to tell mother."

The door opened, and Maria in a loose wrapper, looking very cross and peevish, entered. The frown on her face deepened when she discovered Pauline at Guy's bedside.

"What is the trouble?" she asked in a snappish tone. "I think you are rather early Pauline."

"Oh, Maria, I am almost heartbroken over what Guy did yesterday."

"You are very foolish to allow yourself to be annoyed over so frivolous a matter as that," said Maria, contracting her pretty brow into a frown. "The best gentlemen in the land get on a spree once in a lifetime. It was New Year's day, and Guy, who had been used only to milk and water, was unaccustomed to the strength of good society beverage on such occasions. Don't blame him, but blame the way he was brought up."

"Maria," said Guy spiritedly, "say no more about this, for I assure you I am not proud of it. I would not have my mother know it for any thing in the world."

"How did you know it, Pauline," Maria asked with a frown still on her pretty face. Pauline told her how she had come to make a New Year's call, and had witnessed her brother take his first glass of intoxicating liquors.

"I think you get over your mourning rather soon, to enter a house among gay guests on such an occasion as yesterday was," said Maria sarcastically.

"Yes, I came where I could see and hear the gay assembly, and was just in time to witness my brother drink his first glass, put into his hand by his wife," was the keen retort, and fearing she would say more, Pauline rose and left the room.

CHAPTER XXI.

FIVE YEARS LATER.

Oh unexpected stroke, worse than of death,
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? Thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of gods? Where I had hoped to spend
Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both.

—*Milton.*

TIME works wonders. Many thousands of changes are brought about in the lapse of five years. Some changes are for the better and some for the worse. The human family seems playing on a great teeter. One generation we find going up and their descendants coming down, while those who were down the generation before, are now going up. It is a psychological puzzle which baffles the skill of the deepest philosopher. When we draw the curtain aside and look upon the work wrought in the Denesmore family by five short years, we are wont to exclaim: "Oh, change! Oh wondrous change, what has done it? What has bleached Mrs. Denesmore's hair until it is almost white as snow? What has made her step more feeble than if she

had passed her threescore years, and what has deepened those lines upon the once handsome face, until she has the appearance of being wrinkled and old? Not only Mrs. Denesmore in her widow's weeds and haggard wretchedness speaks of the terrible change, but every trace of joy and happiness has disappeared from Pauline's face, leaving a sad, aching void, which bespeaks a tale of woe most terrible to think of. Maria seems to have grown much older than she should be, and there is a wearied, dissatisfied look on her face which seems to sharpen her soured temper, and her eyes have grown red with weeping and watching. Why all this misery? Why such visible signs of woe? There is no crape on the door—it cannot be death." Though the Denesmore homestead has lost some of its grandeur and beauty in its ornamentation, it is still comfortable and elegant.

It is the blighting curse of rum which has fallen on the once happy home of the Denesmore's. Hearts, instead of doors are draped in mourning, and heads are bowed to the dust in humiliation and shame. Days and nights of anxious watching are telling on the mother, sister and wife of Dr. Guy Denesmore. In Guy there is the saddest and most marked change of all. From the handsome, genteel young physician as we knew him, he has become the bloated, degraded, drunken wretch of the present. That poor old mother

who has watched him so many anxious days, hoping, fearing, and praying for his reformation, was at last compelled to admit that her son was treading the downward road to ruin. What a humiliating acknowledgment for a mother to make, that her dutiful, loving son was an irredeemable drunkard. He of whom she was so justly proud, and who should have been the prop and stay of her declining years was now a complete wreck, while his self-sacrificing mother was utterly powerless to check his downward career. This has made the change. When we think of Guy Denesmore as he was, and see him as he is, a bloated, stupefied, degraded human being, we feel constrained to ask, "Is it possible?" But such changes are not uncommon, and will be witnessed as long as saloons are permitted to flourish in our country. Why boast of freedom when the most abject slavery is everywhere in our land? Are we free from crime, sin and misery, when rum holes are on every corner and the devil's emissaries are ever ready to lay hands upon the unwary, and under the guise of friendship drag him into some saloon where the fetters of his slavery may be more closely riveted?

Pauline stood at the window, gazing out upon the scene which had been familiar to her from early childhood. That scene is very nearly the same as when presented to the reader. Some of the trees have grown a little taller, a little larger

and the improvements are just a little out of repair, but in the main the scene is about the same. But how changed is Pauline since we first knew her. That heart then overflowing with youthful merriment, is full of dark despair. Those eyes then sparkling with brightness are now sad and downcast.

"Oh, how can we leave our home! this dear old place where I was born?" she asked aloud. The words seemed bursts of agony wrung from her heart. Her mother heard her, and began sobbing with a grief which would not be suppressed. Pauline, blaming herself for allowing her emotions to overcome her, hastened to her mother's side, and throwing her arms about her, said:

"We have a whole year to stay here yet, mother; perhaps our Heavenly Father will call us home before the time shall expire. I am so thankful that father was spared this affliction. He died without knowing that Guy had even taken his first glass. Although it might not have happened had father lived, I am glad he was called home before the great blow fell."

"No, no, no, he could not have saved him. The evil had too powerful a hold on Guy before any of us even suspected it. His father would have been blinded and deceived the same as we were," the mother answered sadly.

"But his father would have been able to keep

the property," chimed in the selfish Maria. "I don't know what is going to become of me unless I go back to my mother."

No one made any answer, and silence—a long silence ensued. Guy's experience was the same as the experience of many hundreds before him, —he fully intended that the first glass should be his last. He had acted wholly from impulse in taking his first glass, and had formed the resolution so often formed, to stop right there. But he had found wine pleasant to the taste, and the second glass was exhilarating and called for the third, and so on until it all ended in a night of debauchery, followed by a day of mental and physical suffering. When he was able to go out on the streets again he felt that he was greatly changed. Until this moment of his life he had lived above reproach, and nothing could be said against his character, but the recollection of last night's debauch made him quite crestfallen. He had scarcely entered his office, when one of his fast acquaintances of New Year's day entered, and slapping him gaily on the shoulder said that he was now one of them, and it would not go so hard next time, and concluded by inviting him across the street to "wet his whistle." Guy politely, yet firmly refused, and his new acquaintance with a hearty laugh, went away saying:

"You'll get over it, Doc, and come round yet. I'll not urge you, but I know you are bound to

become one of the b-hoys." It had always been a fixed principle of Guy, to attend strictly to his own business and antagonize no one. Others could do just as they pleased, he would not dictate. Guy would laugh at William Strasmore, who never lost a chance to lecture on the evils of intemperance. When the young man insinuated to Guy a few days after his first glass, that he always knew he would be one of their set, he thought of William Strasmore, who had always adopted the theory of coming out from among those in whom he did not believe. "No one ever thought he would be one of their set," said the young doctor as he reflected on the act which he deemed a disgrace to him. Young men of wealth and station, called to remind Guy that he was one of their set, and by delicate inuendoes sought to compliment his humor during the little spree. He felt thankful when a professional call brought him back to the realities of the business world. From that time forth he seemed to see through a new pair of eyes.

Before a month of the New Year was gone, Guy was summoned to the bedside of his father, who had suddenly been seized with a malignant fever. Anxious days and nights of watching were spent. The best physicians the city afforded were called in counsel, but all of no avail. Both love and skill failed, and one evening, as the sun was sinking in the west, the family gathered

about the dying Christian to witness the last struggle. Guy stood by his grief-stricken mother, and watched the wave of life surging to and fro. When almost over, and the dying man stood as it were with one foot on earth and one in Heaven, he seemed to revive a moment as if to give some parting blessing or instruction. Guy bent low to catch what trembled on his lips. In a low, yet distinct murmur the dying father said:

"My son, I entrust your mother and sister to your care." He was forced to pause, for his breath was growing very short, and for a few moments the silence was broken only by the sobs of the weeping family. Having regained sufficient strength, he continued: "Guy, it is a great trust; be faithful to it. Be a dutiful son to your mother, and a kind brother to your sister."

There were other words murmured like the faint echoes coming from the borderland of shadows, but so faintly were they breathed, that no intelligence could be gleaned from the accents. All then became still. The eyes were fixed and glassy and the breathing had stopped. Guy knew that his father was gone. Gone to that land from whose mysterious bourne no traveler ever returns. When the last sad rites were over, and Pauline was left alone, she remembered that Guy was surrounded by temptations which even

his strength might not be able to resist. The recollection of that first glass was so indelibly impressed on her mind, that time would not efface it. If she always had him at her side, she thought he would be safe, and after consulting with her mother on the subject, they requested young Dr. Denesmore to come and share their home with them. Their plan succeeded much better than they dared hope, for even Maria willingly consented, and a few weeks later they were installed in the old homestead of the Denesmores.

A few months later, Dr. Denesmore was blessed with a beautiful infant. The whole family almost worshipped the little girl baby, and though an experienced nurse was employed, its grandmother Denesmore and aunt Pauline were its real nurses. They believed that love could do more with a weak baby than hired skill. At Pauline's earnest request, the baby was given her name, and became the sweet little Pauline number two. She was cross and fretful, as babies usually are, but her aunt Pauline as self-constituted nurse, never grew tired of trying to alleviate her infant sufferings, night nor day. The baby annoyed its mother very much, for Maria never could endure a crying child. Maria's mother advised that she have some choice wine to strengthen her, and suggested weakened liquor for the baby. Mrs. Denesmore's orthodox regularity was of course shocked by this suggestion,

and she opposed it from the first. She spoke of her own success in baby raising, and said her children were healthy from birth to maturity, without the aid of any alcoholic liquors. Mrs. Day declared that as she had raised one more baby than Mrs. Denesmore, her judgment on such matters was preferable. Although Pauline plead earnestly with them not to stupefy the bright little intellect with alcoholic drinks, her opinion on baby raising was held at naught, and she of course was not to be consulted. Mrs. Day told how cross and fretful Ernest was, and how completely she was worn out, until a wise physician recommended beer, ale and wine, and what a good child he was after that, just slept all the time unless he was hungry.

"He often takes long sleeps from the effect of those drinks yet," said Guy to his wife when Maria had communicated to him what her mother had said. Maria's eyes flashed fire at the insinuation, and then and there settled the liquor question. The very next day she told her mother to bring just what she thought best for her, and if her husband would not furnish her the necessaries of life, her father would. Guy who had not refused her request from niggardly views, felt not a little piqued at her remark. He was about to make some keen retort, but checking himself, he left the house. It was some time before he returned, and when he did a glass of

wine and a bottle of beer stood on the small stand at Maria's bedside. She was victorious, and could afford to be amiable toward her husband, and when her supply of liquor was gone, she insisted on her husband getting more. In order to procure it, he went to a place he had never frequented. There he met the same fast young men who had declared they always knew he would be "one of the b-hoys."

"Doc, you'd better sample that wine before you take it away," said one of the fast young men. He did so, and may be said to have entered on the broad highway to ruin from that date. His wife, his friends and everybody save his mother and sister, who might be fanatics on the subject, seemed to be drawing him upon this broad highway.

Ernest Day was a close student of human nature. He had made men a life-long study. He knew just how far to lead George Hammond before turning him over to the bad. He also knew to what length Dr. Denesmore would go if once a slave to strong drink. He witnessed Guy's first glass with a feeling of exultation. It may seem strange that he desired the ruin of his sister's husband, yet from purely selfish motives and a desire for revenge, he deliberately planned it.

We will not go into details. Guy fell time and again, keenly feeling the mortification with each

return to soberness, and resolving at each time that it should be the last. We can form an idea of what it is to make a resolution of that kind, but we have no idea of the strength, the support and help a man needs to resist such temptation when placed before him. When the appetite has been created, then even iron wills break down beneath it. We are too harsh with the liquor drinker, but not harsh enough with the liquor seller. While the temptation is permitted to be placed before them, a large per cent. of the tempted will fall. Other vices join hands with intemperance, and all conspire to whirl the victim on to certain ruin.

Thus it was with Dr. Denesmore. The vice of drinking was accompanied by the kindred vice of gambling, and the large fortune left him by his father, with the additional amount he had accumulated himself, was soon swallowed up; all gone before he was hardly aware of it. One morning after a night's debauch, he found himself penniless, disgraced and ruined.

He could not bear to meet his family and the loving caress of his little girl, who was then at that charming age when she had begun to put baby thoughts into baby words. His thoughts were mainly of the child he had cheated and wronged.

"Oh, Heaven, I have disgraced and robbed her! She is ruined, a beggar, and I have done

it! I wish I were dead. No, no, I am cursed if I live, but not fit to die."

The wretched man walked the floor of his office which was now seldom, if ever, visited by a patient. Dr. Patterson had dissolved the partnership between them some months previous, and Dr. Denesmore seldom had a call. Dr. Patterson, Guy's senior partner had tried hard to redeem him, but finally gave him up when he found it absolutely necessary.

The devil always sends his agent in due time to prevent his victims from throwing off the chains which he is closely riveting, and is never too late to head off reformation. It was so on this morning when Guy Denesmore was on the eve of reforming or committing suicide. Ernest Day, with oily words of sympathy, tempered with encouragement, came to Dr. Denesmore's. The doctor could not recognize anything in him, save what he pretended to be. Guy Denesmore was not a character reader; he was also unsuspicious, and the very man to be made a victim by such an unscrupulous person as Ernest Day. Even if he had suspected his design, he had not strength to say: "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Ernest quickly, carefully and deftly sketched a prosperous future for the ruined man, and bade him take heart. He was young, with a constitution as yet but little impaired, and able to

be a man among men. Upon Guy making promises to reform (the devil is usually a reformer), Ernest agreed to meet all of Guy's liabilities, furnish him capital for a new start, and try to reinstate him with Dr. Patterson.

"Old Doc thinks a great deal of you," Ernest continued with a shrewd smile. "By a little caution, and going on just as you should, you can come into his practice, for he will soon retire."

"But you cannot do this much for me just on the strength of my word," said Guy thoughtfully.

"No, hardly," Ernest answered with a bland smile. "It would't be very business-like, and I am a great stickler for having everything business-like. I will do all in my power to redeem you and your lost fortune, and give vou another lift."

"But I have nothing to secure you," interrupted Guy.

"No, I know you have nothing of your own, but I thought your mother and sister might mortgage the home place for the money."

"What!" broke in Guy, in rage and astonishment, "ask them to sign away the old home? No! better eke out a miserable existence or sink forever from sight in the slough of despondency. I would not care if it was not for my baby."

Guy could say no more. He broke down almost completely, and turned away his head.

The cool, shrewd, calculating Ernest Day, stood smiling blandly for a moment, and then said:

"You seem to think a mortgage is a warranty deed. They need not part with their home. You are not so dishonest as to avoid the payment, and the notes will be on the installment plan. I will be lenient with you—as much so as possible. Just regain your lost reputation, and you know your fortune is made. I would not have made the proposition, had I not known how glad your mother and sister would have been to accommodate you. And your baby will never know to what straits you have been reduced."

The last hint decided Guy. He loved his mother and sister, but his love for his child bordered on idolatry. Ernest Day parted from the ruined man, as fully confident that he would own the home of Pauline Denesmore, as if he had had the deed to it, locked up in his iron vault.

Mrs. Denesmore and Pauline heard Guy's resolution to do better with joy and thankfulness. When he told them he was to again enter into a co-partnership with Dr. Patterson, hope sprang up once more in their breasts, and although through Guy's mismanagement, all their property save their homestead had been swept away, they were perfectly willing to trust the son and brother again, and expressed a hearty willingness to sign the mortgage. When Pauline learned that the mortgage was to be made to Ernest Day, she was

thoughtful and troubled. "Why could it not have been some one else?" she asked herself. She had not only grown to dislike, but to dread Ernest Day, who within the past year had persistently urged his suit.

But Pauline's confidence in her brother was unbounded. She knew he would keep his word, and they would never realize that any but themselves had a claim on the dear old homestead. The mere fact of the mortgage being held by Ernest Day, need not give her any uneasiness. Her brother would pay it. How she had miscalculated may easily be guessed. Though Guy was once more in business with Dr. Patterson, it was on a less profitable basis, and the world was not to him as it had been before. Confidence in him was shaken, and he not only found himself obliged to battle with himself, but adversity on every hand.

At last he grew disheartened, discontented, and fell. The old life returned with all its awful horror, and fell like a thunderbolt on that patient mother and kind sister. They knew the inevitable fate which awaited them, and tried to prepare themselves to meet it. On the morning with which this chapter opens, Ernest Day had insulted Pauline by informing her that the only way she could save her home was by becoming Mrs. Day. She had rejected him again, and indignantly ordered him from her presence. As he turned to go away, he said:

"You will repent this day's work, Miss Denesmore. You may think now that it is an easy thing to give up home and all, but you will yet learn that these bombastic words, and high and mighty airs will not save your home, nor put money in your pocket."

When Pauline returned to her room to be alone, she sighed as she had often done before, but never had she felt so wronged. She had now grown to hate Ernest Day and could no longer endure his presence. Deeply feeling her humiliation, she buried her face in her hands and cried:

"Oh, Willie, Willie, Willie, had your life been spared, all this woe would have been averted. Your own strong arm could have saved Guy. I dare not think of Guy as he was five years ago, and then look at him as he is now."

CHAPTER XXII.

ARTHUR TEMPLETON.

"Oft does the heart indulge the rising thought
Which still recurs, unlooked for and unsought;
My soul to Fancy's fond suggestion yields,
And roams romantic o'er her airy fields."

—*Byron.*

THE five years that have passed, have wrought as wonderful a change in the Hammonds as it has in the Denesmores. Here we see the teeter board of nature completely changing. As one family goes down, the other comes up. Deena Hammond, now contented and respectable, even though the brightest dreams of her youth have faded away; five mornings out of each week taking her place in the village school as teacher in the intermediate department. She is loved by both parents and pupils, for she loves her work, and is faithful in her task. There is a quiet happiness at that humble little cottage, presided over by Deena, and kept so neat and tidy by her own industrious hands. It was an humble home 'tis true, and far from being the fine mansion with gilded halls and elaborate paintings of

which she had dreamed when a child; but here are peace, contentment, and a quiet joy that surpasses the empty pleasures of golden palace. Every Saturday, Deena's subdued voice could be heard humming some familiar air, as she went about her household duties. Lillie's childish laughter filled the house, as she frolicked with her numerous pets. She paused sometimes to tease her sister about Mr Templeton, or tell her young friend across the way some joke on him. Lillie likes Mr. Templeton more than all her other friends. Lillie is not only a fun-loving child, but she takes time to build air-castles for the future, as what child does not. She intends when grown to womanhood, to take her sister's place in the school after she has given it up, and learn to play the organ for the church. It is quite a humble path marked out by Lillie, and a dream that may be realized after all. But she declares to her sister that she has one higher ambition, and this is to write a romance of real life with Mr. Arthur Templeton as the hero, and dedicate it to her sister Deena.

There is no doubt but that Lillie was puzzled to understand why Deena was so quiet when Mr. Templeton was around, and then what made Mr. Templeton, whom she thought the "smartest man she ever knew," blush and look so silly when talking to Deena. When Mr. Templeton asked her sister to ride with him in his new phaeton,

Lillie could not understand why she refused. When Deena was asked by her little sister if she did not like Mr. Templeton, she answered:

"Oh, yes, child—do hush dear, you don't know just what you are talking about."

It all seemed so queer to Lillie, and Deena seemed such an inconsistent character, that she shook her little head and said she could not have a place in her book.

That very afternoon, Mr. Arthur Templeton called at the cottage on an errand for his mother. Deena answered the bell, and Lillie who was watching them, at once marked the young man's embarrassment as he was invited into the little parlor.

"No, no, thank you, Miss Hammond," he stammered. "My mother sent me—or requested me to come—or seemed to think I had better come to ask your judgment—or invite you to our house to get your opinion on the new organ for the church. The committee of ladies who have the matter in charge, meet at my mother's Wednesday afternoon at four o'clock."

While delivering this short message, the poor fellow changed color half a dozen times and was glad to hurry away when the last words were spoken. When he was gone, Lillie went to her sister, and in a teasing mood said:

"I guess I can't put him in the book after all. He's too awkward, and an awkward hero would

be sure to spoil a book. May be I could do it, though, for he must be in it."

"What do you mean?" asked Deena.

"I mean that Mr. Templeton must be my hero, just as he is except when he is with you," the child answered with great gravity. "I can't have him in my book stammering, and blushing, holding the rim of his hat as if he was afraid it would turn to your last year's poke bonnet. I guess I will have to polish him some."

While Deena was listening to Lillie's portrayal of Mr. Templeton's deportment, that gentleman was walking rapidly toward his home very much put out with himself.

"Why am I so foolish when in her presence," he asked himself, evidently greatly vexed. "I seem to lose all self-command, and become a blundering idiot. A bashful schoolboy in his first declamation would do as well as I."

That evening, as his mother and himself were alone in the quiet little sitting room, the mother engaged in that most homelike labor, knitting, while the cat was purring on the rug at her feet, presenting a familiar, yet ever new picture of peace and contentment, the son cast anxious enquiring glances at his mother. Mrs. Templeton, with her snow-white apron, neatly fitting gray dress, snowy cap frill and collar, and the softest silver hair just peeping out from beneath her cap border, was a pleasant picture of ease and con-

tentment. Modenia, as many others, had found in this old woman a wise and true counselor. Three years ago, as Modenia turned away from the grave of her father, bowed with grief at the loss of him, though he had wrecked his own life and made her life wretched, and notwithstanding the knowledge that while he lived he was in constant peril of "*The Worst Foe*," this kind lady had taken her to her heart and comforted her as only a Christian can. As Deena wept upon her bosom, she felt constrained to say: "Her people shall be my people, and her God, my God;" and from thenceforth their warm friendship became like that of mother and daughter.

Arthur Templeton had marked out a career rather high in life. When only a child he had advocated that human nature would be human nature. He believed in no such thing as fate. The course he had marked out for himself was commendable, had he been equal to the task. He soon found he was not, and went through the world a disappointed man. In early life he had exalted dreams of one day occupying a high place in the world. He dreamed of being a philanthropist, and devoting his life to the advancement of the general school system. The need of popular education and the elevation of the masses, he hoped to impress on the minds of the people. Being left without a father at a very early age, and his kind mother not having

it in her heart to disturb her boy's day-dreams with the sterner realities of life, he was permitted to dream on until he learned by sad experience that his plans were visionary and impracticable. After Arthur had completed his college course they removed to Kansas, where Arthur's father had purchased a large tract of land shortly before his death. Here the young enthusiast had entered into his work with zeal and determination. When he first became acquainted with Modenia Hammond, he could not but admire her self-reliance and energy. He soon found himself calling at her school rather frequently, but there was a pleasure in these calls, and in spite of his bashfulness they became more frequent. His day-dreams changed. Miss Hammond occupied a conspicuous place in them. Soon after her father's death he had proposed to her, but met a strange rejection. It gave him pain, but did not altogether deprive him of hope. Arthur Templeton was greatly in earnest in everything he set himself about, and he was not one to easily despair.

He sat for a long time, his head bowed in thought, while his mother diligently plied her knitting needles. So still and silent was he with his arms folded across his breast, that he seemed to be studying the opposite corner of the fireplace. At last he broke the silence with:

"Mother, what do you think of Miss Hammond?"

The kind old lady opened her eyes, looked at him a moment, and answered:

"Deena is a very good girl, Arthur. The course she took with her intemperate father was very wise. It was a great trial no doubt to come way out here among strangers. Her trials with him show real heroism, and how he managed to get liquor when there was none, is surprising. Yet she never gave up, and by her vigilance made her father a sober man before he died."

"Mother, don't you think a woman can judge a woman better than a man can?"

"Not always—though she sometimes may."

A long silence followed, and Arthur then commenced:

"Over two years ago, mother, I asked Miss Hammond to be my wife."

Mrs. Templeton kept on with her knitting, not evincing the least surprise. Arthur was puzzled at his mother's coolness, and asked:

"Did you know it?"

"I knew such was your intention," the mother answered, plying her knitting needles briskly. "Women cannot always judge women aright, but I can read my son, I am sure." He was silent and thoughtful for a few moments, and then he said:

"I shall never forget the look of terror Miss Hammond gave me when I proposed marriage to her. She sprang to her feet as if frightened and

surprised, and cried: 'No, no, no, a thousand times no!' She walked to the window and seemed in great distress, then threw herself into a chair, and for a few moments buried her white face in her hands. When she looked up again, I never saw such firmness expressed in features or voice. She seemed afraid that I was offended, and went on to assure me that she appreciated my friendship, but that no nearer relation than the best friendship could ever exist between us. It has gradually settled on my mind that there is something more in Miss Hammond's past history than the care of an intemperate father or a lost brother. She once remarked that all the woe which had come on both her mother and herself, was through strong drink. What do you think of it all, mother?"

"You have given up Miss Hammond, have you not?" she asked.

"I do not know. I shall not urge the matter very strongly," he answered evasively, for he was not willing to admit even to his mother, how hard the struggle had really been.

"Whatever there may be in Miss Hammond's past life, my son, you may have perfect confidence in her," said the mother.

"I have."

"So have I. Try to regain her friendship as you had it before you made your proposal. If she has a skeleton in the closet, you can rest

assured it is from no wrong doing on her part. Just wait the development of time; the mist may yet clear away; but above all let us endeavor to prove ourselves worthy friends of these orphan girls."

"We will, mother. I will ever be a true, unselfish friend of Deena Hammond and her little sister. I will be a brother to both, if I can be no nearer to Deena."

If Arthur Templeton had seen Deena Hammond on that evening, perusing a book of poetry he had given her to read, in which he had marked his favorite passages, and noted with what rapture she read his favorites, he might have taken hope. As she pressed the gift, made precious for the giver's sake, to her heart, she mentally soliloquized:

"Oh, Arthur Templeton, I am proud in your love, even though you may never know that it is returned. Though I may never be able to give you what the love of a true woman's heart dictates—a wife's devotion, it is better that I know you, for your love even from a distance, has raised me above the ills and injustice of humanity."

Had Arthur Templeton known her thoughts and seen her tears, it would have settled his mind, and no more would he have asked himself the question, "Does she care for me?" Mrs. Templeton had read the hearts of both her son and

Deena aright. There was a marked change in his deportment toward Deena from that time, until Lillie declared that Mr. Templeton could go in her book just as he was.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS.

"Lo! a cloud about to vanish from the day;
And a brazen wrong to crumble into clay.
Lo! the right is about to conquer; CLEAR THE WAY!
With the right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door;
With the giant wrong shall fall
Many others, great and small,
That for ages long have held us for their prey,
Men of thought and men of action, CLEAR THE WAY!

—*Charles Mackay.*

NO TRACE of William Strasmore's assassin had been found. Although the most skillful detectives had been employed to work the case, so carefully had the murderer covered his tracks, there was no clue left to work on. His friends and outraged law could only wait and hope that in time "murder would out."

The good seed sown by William Strasmore, had taken root, and was now ready to multiply. His class of thirteen boys whom we have mentioned, as they stood beside the dead form of their beloved instructor, and realized that their dearest, wisest earthly counselor had been snatch-

ed away from them, perhaps by the demons against whom he made war, vowed then and there, eternal enmity to rum. They did not seek revenge against even his fell destroyer, for his assassin was man, and William Strasmore but a martyr to the truth; but they sought vengeance, and the destruction of the enemy of mankind, *The Worst Foe*, KING ALCOHOL. By the side of their murdered teacher, feeling his loss as only boys of their age and hard experience can, they pledged themselves anew never to forget his teachings; never to frequent places of vice; always to regard whisky as their worst foe; to touch not, taste not, and handle not; and never to let an opportunity pass to strike a blow at the hideous evil which was sweeping every day thousands of loved ones into the flaming pit of hell. Clothed in this strong armor of safety, these gallant boys have gone through fiery trials unscorched, and we shall hear from them in the future. Some of them finished the race of life at an early age, and entered into that joy known only to the blest. Others were called to different parts of the country. Although they were not free from the temptations of strong drink, although in every city and town, gilded dens of vice, where cooling liquids during the heated term and hot drinks in winter, were temptingly displayed, they never yielded.

"I'd die before I'd touch it," said Bill Barnes,

and he would. Bill has been completely metamorphosed. He is a studious lawyer's clerk, and bids fair to make a promising attorney. One hot day while in a strange city on business, Bill was consumed with a burning thirst. Oh, for a drink of cool water! He was far from his hotel, and he asked an attorney in whose office he was transacting business, for a drink of water.

"Go down below and you will find a saloon. We always go there for a fresh drink," said the attorney. Bill explained that he wanted water. "Very well, they keep iced water there."

Bill hesitated several moments, and decided to go, for his throat was dry and parched. When he entered the saloon and called for a drink of water, the proprietor gruffly answered:

"I don't keep water to give away."

"I will buy it," said Bill.

"We don't sell water," said the proprietor, "but if you will buy a glass of beer, we will give you all the water you want."

Bill reflected a moment, and his old reckless spirit for the moment got the better of him. "Bring on the beer and plenty of iced water." A moment later this smiling agent of the devil had brought the young man a glass of foaming beer and a glass of iced water. Bill paid for them, and taking up the glass of water, drained it.

"I have drank the water, now you may have the beer," he said, and with this he threw beer,

glass and all, into the proprietor's face, and hurriedly left the saloon. This little incident lead Bill to think that many young men entering cities were forced to drink liquor they really did not want. He began advocating a new reform; that the temperance people shall provide in large cities, suitable places where pure cold water could be found by strangers, without having to go into a saloon to slake their thirst. We see many such fountains now, but there are not near enough to supply the demand.

In Staunton, things were growing worse. The number of saloons and breweries were increasing, and with them the increase in the number of other places of vice. The temperance organizations, having lost their wide-awake leader, did not feel strong enough to undertake to diminish the increasing strongholds of the enemy, and things seemed to run riot. Temperance people had grown discouraged and had almost abandoned the field, when the "Woman's Christian Temperance Union" sprang nobly to the rescue, raised the battle cry and rallied the wavering forces for a grand assault against the enemy's works.

At this time there was a band of teetotalers, the remnant of a once prosperous organization, and a few others who felt like holding the fort as long as possible. They sought co-operation with the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, to help try and suppress the evil. Weekly entertain-

ments were given, consisting of temperance lectures, songs and music. These meetings were held in a hall near the neighborhood where most of the saloons were flourishing. The whisky men muttered threats and curses against this dangerous organization, as well as against the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, which together had created an interest which was drawing hundreds of customers away from them.

Soon after the foreclosure of the mortgage on the Denesmore home, George Greene, the temperance boy whom we have mentioned, and who was now almost a man and still a worker in the cause, was placed on the committee for arranging a programme for the next entertainment. He proposed that they engage Miss Pauline Denesmore to prepare an essay. Pauline had been so completely buried in her own sorrow, that she had for the last few years almost completely dropped out of the temperance organization. Some thought it would be placing Pauline in an embarrassing position, but a gentleman who had known her in the past, as a temperance worker, was sure that she would feel a relief in being able to do the cause some good now.

"She was once well known in this city," the gentleman continued; "but since those great sorrows have fallen upon her she has kept herself shut out from the world. Her sad history is well known, however, and the announcement that

she is to speak on the question of temperance, will fill our hall to overflowing. It might be painful to her, and the great change we shall witness in her will be painful to ourselves, but will it not have its effect for good? Will not every word she utters be more effective, and the conviction of every truth sink deep into the hearts of her hearers? Nothing is more impressive than an ocular demonstration of an evil, and such we shall have."

When the request was made to Miss Denesmore, she paused for a few moments to consider whether she could accomplish the task or not. "Could she accomplish any good by it," she asked herself. She had once told her father that she intended to improve by William's worthy example, and "sow by all waters." Months had grown into years, while she sunk deeper and deeper into despair, with scarce a hope for anything better in this life. After a few moments of awkward silence, she answered:

"I am glad you have called on me, for although it will cost me a great effort, I am willing to do all in my power to put down the foe that has brought me so much misery. Although I may never know that my words have taken effect, yet my soul will be in the work, and we can only ask a blessing thereon."

"Your labor will not be in vain, Miss Denesmore," said George Greene. "The work begun

by Mr. Strasmore, has brought forth principles in us as fixed as the stars, and the harvest is not yet."

She consented, and chose for her subject, The Ballot. The committee had made arrangements to procure a prohibition lecturer to follow the essay, and on their return the programme was completed and sent to the printer. Next day, bill posters were busy putting up the following;

"TEMPERANCE! TEMPERANCE!

DON'T FAIL TO COME.

MISS PAULINE DENESMORE,

WILL READ AN ORIGINAL ESSAY ON

"THE BALLOT,"

WHICH WILL BE FOLLOWED BY AN ABLE

PROHIBITION LECTURE,

BY

HON. W. A. STRASMORE.

AT TEMPERANCE HALL, ON CORNER OF MAIN AND MYRTLE STREETS, WEDNESDAY EVE., AT 7:30 P. M."

December, A. D., 187–.

These bills were read and re-read. The saloon keepers whispered with each other. Pauline Denesmore was going to read an original essay,

and they knew they would be handled without gloves. The name Strasmore produced profound wonder among all classes of people. Who could he be? probably he was some distant relative of Lawyer Strasmore, perhaps he had inherited his love of the temperance cause. Quite likely this Hon. W. A. Strasmore was a great uncle, thought some. Others who knew that William had no relatives, thought it only a strange co-incidence.

George Greene had chosen the man Strasmore from three names given him, knowing that the name in connection with Pauline's would be sure to attract a crowd, for everybody had heard her sad story. He was correct, for the names excited comment, and soon there was great anxiety to see and hear them.

There were two persons whose feelings were stirred at sight of these bills. One, a man of means and fashionably dressed, who might have been mistaken for a gentleman, paused at one, read it, and hurried away down the street, while strange emotions marked his features. The other was a sort of a shabby genteel personage, walking along the street, his head bowed and steps unsteady, and his clothes all much the worse for wear. He paused in front of one of the posters, for his bleared eyes had caught a name which to him seemed familiar, and steadying himself, read it through.

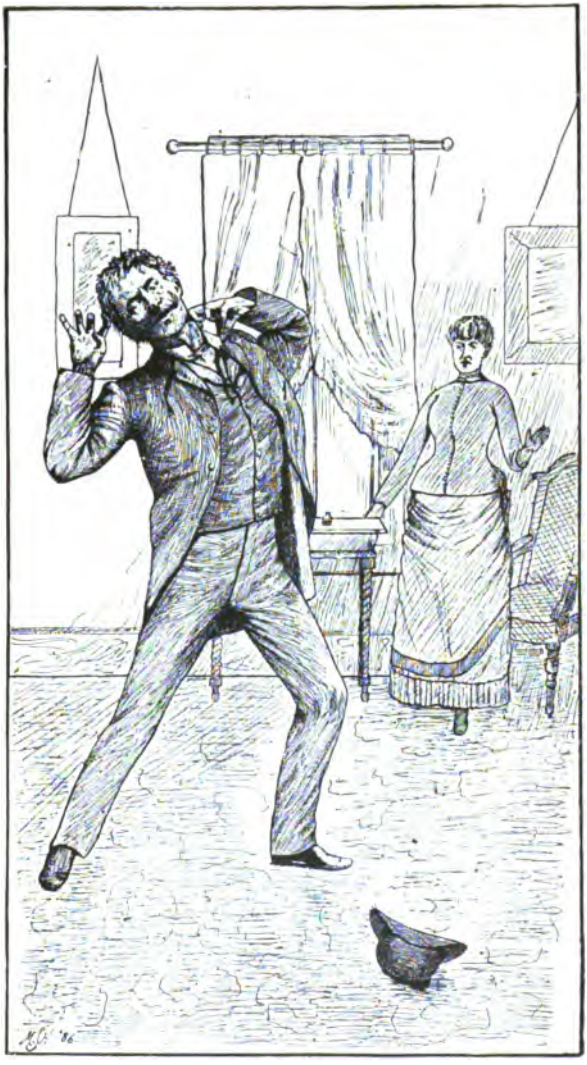
"Pauline Denesmore—an essay on the ballot!"

he ejaculated, "Oh, Heaven, I have driven her to it! Who is Strasmore? I would like to talk with him— no, I can't meet a gentleman, for I feel my fallen condition every time I see one. Oh, Will! is there a hereafter, as we believed? If I knew there was not, to-morrow would know the end of this miserable existence."

The air seemed filled with imps and his hand became a wreathing serpent and still he knew it to be his own hand. The imps on his shoulder almost set his brain wild by crying: "End your existence! end your existence!"

In this state of mind Dr. Denesmore reached home and went directly to Pauline's room. At sight of his sister bending over her essay, he gave utterance to a groan of anguish. She laid aside her manuscript, and went to work to comfort him as best she could. He began talking about Strasmore, and she tried to explain that the lecturer was only another man of the same name. He could not be related to William Strasmore for he had no relations. Guy stood staring at her in such a wild manner that she became frightened, and was about to call some one, when he fell upon the floor, screaming and clawing as if fighting some monster.

"Take it off! take it off! take this wild-cat away from me, it is tearing my throat to pieces!" he screamed. Assistance came and the sufferer was removed to his room and Dr. Patterson sent for.



DELIRIUM TREMENS.

"What is it, doctor, is he mad or insane ?"—See page 237.

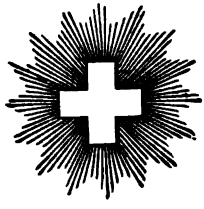
Poor Pauline was in deep distress. She could only walk the floor and wring her hands in silence. What did all this madness mean? When the doctor came, she waited until he had examined his patient and administered some nerve quieting narcotics. As the doctor came out, he found the white-faced lady waiting in the hall for him.

"Oh! what is it, doctor, is he mad or insane?" she asked.

"No, no, Miss Denesmore," said the doctor, evasively. "Poor Guy is slightly deranged for the present, but I think he will come out of it all right. I shall give him every care."

"What is it, doctor, oh, what gives him that wild stare, and makes him scream of snakes and beasts?"

"He has *delirium tremens!*"



CHAPTER XXIV.

PAULINE'S EFFORTS BLESSED.

"For nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
Labor, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind."

—*Milton.*

PAULINE was aware of the suffering and disgrace of her brother, but the doctor had pronounced him out of danger and said that it might be a lesson to him yet, and bring about a reformation. She had been asked to help in the effort to suppress this evil; and timid, modest Pauline, though not one of those persons who long to immortalize themselves on the platform, yet resolved to do what she could. Her words might not bear more than a feather's weight, yet she would add her mite.

The evening on which she was to make her debut came, and cowering, trembling Pauline found the hall crowded. It was with some difficulty that George Greene conducted the pale, trembling young lady to the rostrum. Her face

was in ghostly contrast with her mourning garments, and many who had known her only in the days of happiness and prosperity, could scarce believe that she was the same person.

"Licker done it all," Sam Brown whispered to his neighbor. "I tell ye, if there's a cuss on earth, it's licker."

The temperance choir had prepared that excellent temperance song composed by Rev. S. A. Worcester, a missionary among the Indians, and the organ striking up, they began the famous

CRAMBAMBULI*

My drink shall be the flowing fountain,
Transparent, sparkling, cool and pure,
Fresh from the cleft of rock or mountain,
For fevered head and thirst, a cure.
Ye maddening drinks begone from me,
Rum, whisky and crambambuli,
Ye pois'nous drinks, begone from me,
Wine, cider, and crambambuli.

"I saw a sight most melancholy,
A drunkard in the public way;
His face was fire, his voice was folly,
There wallowing, like a swine he lay.
Ye fiery drinks, begone from me,
Gin, brandy and crambambuli;
Ye drinks of sots, begone from me,
Ale, porter, and crambambuli.

*Crambambuli is a name given to a drink used in the German Universities. It is prepared by mixing rum and sugar and burning it. The above is really a parody composed by the missionary, on a once celebrated drinking song.

"Long as I live, the thought I'll cherish,
If Heaven vouchsafe to keep me free,
Strong drink is but the way to perish;
Cold water is the drink for me.
Ye murderous drinks, begone from me,
Wine, brandy and crambambuli,
Ye drinks of fools, begone from me,
Beer, sherry and crambambuli."

During the singing, Pauline sat trembling and dreading the coming ordeal. It was during the third stanza that she became quite herself, and a firm determination to do or die took possession of her soul. She saw not the faces of the audience, she thought not of herself; she only saw the pale sweet face of her brother's suffering child, and thought of Guy's degradation, and said to herself:

"Now with all the strength God may give me, I will strike a blow at whisky." When the song was ended, she rose, unrolled her manuscript, and in a firm, yet sweetly melancholy voice, began:

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

"A few years ago, had one told me that I should ever take the stand as a public speaker, I should have pronounced that person a false prophet. To one who does not desire notoriety, even the reading of an essay is an arduous task; and if men who claim to be our protectors would protect us, woman would be silent on all subjects. The most patient wives, mothers and sisters are sometimes roused by indignities

and cruelties too great to bear. The pioneer mother, who in the absence of her husband, defended her home against blood-thirsty savages, has for a century had her praises as a heroine sung. Had there been men at hand to defend her and her children, she would never have taken the rifle in her hand to defend herself. It was only when the men proved powerless to defend France, that Joan d'Arc took the sword in hand. It was only when the gunners deserted the cannon at Monmouth, that the famous Captain Molly took command of the artillery, and in all these instances women have been called heroines, and their praises sounded by the historian. There is no one now so foolish as to sneer at them, and say their acts were acts of folly. Who would be foolish enough to say that the mother who defended her children from the savage was unladylike, and that she should have staid quietly at her fireside, and let her husband or some of the hunters come and defend her? Woman, you say, is weak. So she is, but in the midst of dire calamities, she has been known to become strong, and with a courage equal to man's has accomplished wonders. Those heroines of the past are lauded by the very persons who to-day sneer at the efforts of wives, mothers, daughters and sisters to save husbands, fathers, brothers and sons. If a woman who gallantly risks her life for her children, or for her country is to be praised, why will you deride, abuse, and call that woman unwomanly, who seeks to save those who are dearer to her than life, from a living and an endless death? This question is not new, and yet it will never grow old. It is a picture

upon which we gaze with horror, and being made up of living figures a change is constantly going on. The hunter even pities the tigress that defends her young; but the mother who would sweep the rum shops that degrade and ruin her children, from the face of the earth, must hold her tongue, or she will come under the awful ban of unwomanly conduct. Women cannot bear everything. Poor unfortunate females, struggling like slaves for an existence, while they see the miserable men who promised to love and protect them, spending the combined earnings of both in the saloon. Not only does the wife find her own earnings going into the coffers of the saloon keeper, but she is cheated of the affection of that man who promised her love and protection. Gradually she sees the man who was once the kindest of husbands transformed into a demon, and love changed to hate. Poor weary soul! no wonder you rebel against such harsh treatment, and forgetting you are a woman determine to be free. You gentlemen who have promised us, and who still make lavish promises of protection, why do you not give it? Look on those ragged, helpless children in the street, look at that pale-faced starving woman in the alley, and go to the morgue and gaze upon the disfigured and swollen victim of these robbers, and then deny the truth of the assertion. Do not hurry away, my friend, but stand there long enough to study that ghastly corse. There is a broad high brow, which once a mother kissed; there is a face once honest; there is a great heart which once beat warm with love, but now cold and silent forever. He was a gentle child,

a loving husband and kind father, until caught in the toils of the dread destroyer, he fell. His whole nature then was changed. He became a brute, and all his love was changed to hate. The wife whom he once greeted with words of affection and caresses, now only receives curses and blows. His little children no longer wait with bright, expectant eyes for their father's footsteps, and run to greet him on his return, but awed with a terror the poor little things cannot understand, they hide at his approach, and remain trembling and dreading that father whom it is their nature to love. Who blames the mother of those children if she forgets she is a woman, and arming herself as best she can, flies to the defence of herself, her children, and the most wretched of that wretched family, her husband. But it is too late to save him; his body lies at the morgue; he has been slain by the robbers. Not only is he deprived of his life, but of his immortal soul. The same monsters threaten her children, her relatives and friends. The robber chief is KING ALCOHOL himself, and why condemn the woman, when she rises and with all the strength she possesses, defends her loved ones from the demon. Oh, the air is full of wailing and anguish! If we would only open our eyes and ears to the misery, we would never sleep. The picture is too horrible to admit of any sleep, save that of exhaustion. There are little children crying on the corner of the street now; their thin ragged clothing not sufficient to protect them from even milder weather than this. There is a woman, yes many women, even now, shivering at home trying to warm the almost lifeless body of a

sick child, while the husband and father is spending the money that should go to buy fuel for his family, at the saloon. It is only one picture among tens of thousands of others, none of which are overdrawn. Patient, suffering woman, on her bended knees, with hands clasped and streaming eyes, implores man to save her from this misery, this degradation and woe. If she goes to the saloon keeper to ask him to spare her, she is greeted with sneers, scoffs and indignation. Those whom she loves most are perishing, what must she do? But one thing seems left and that is prayers and tears. That poor, suffering woman, feels as if God had forsaken her. She knows a remedy for the wrong and though she can whisper it, she is unable to bring justice about. On that dark horizon of hers, a light appears. It takes the form of a word, and in bright, burnished letters of gold, there stands out the word

PROHIBITION,

as her salvation. But how can she bring it about? She has no vote. The rumshops are there—the temptations face her husband on every hand, and she is powerless to sweep them away. Men who are her protectors, who boast of chivalry and courtesy to the weaker sex, seem to forget them when it comes to voting. Licensed robbers and murderers are permitted to go at large. Temptation is made legal, and the woman can only suffer and die in silence, or make her appeal to man, her natural protector. As such I come to-night. We ask you not the privilege of voting, if you will protect us. Your party fealty may be dear to you; your obligations to a political friend

great your political promises very sacred; but what can they be compared to the interest womankind has in this subject? Is it as dear as husband, father, brother or child? Is it as great as the life of a loved one? Is it as sacred as the tie which binds husband to wife, father to child, or son to his parents?

Then, kind friends, don't sneer at us poor, weak women, when we appeal to you to have mercy on us, and protect us from these merciless robbers and murderers, for I can call them by no milder term. We are in deadly peril, and from every wretched hovel, from every alley and street there comes the cry of anguish wrung from the hearts of mothers, daughters and sisters, "Oh, save us! save us! — spare our loved ones!" Will you heed our cry? Will you remember it when you vote, and cast your vote for temperance laws, and for judges who will not seek technical flaws to declare them unconstitutional. Give us relief, for we are perishing by thousands. Give us wholesome prohibition laws and honest prohibition officers to execute them, and these dark clouds will soon roll away. The rags will fall from the suffering children on the streets, to be replaced by comfortable clothing; the pale wan face of the mother, wife and daughter, will become flushed with health. The dark, dreary hovel will be transformed to a comfortable home. Where there is now misery, vice, cruelty and death, there will be happiness, peace, prosperity, love and joy, and such a burst of sunshine will come through these dark clouds, that we will almost think that the kingdom of Heaven has been set up on earth."

All embarrassment had left Pauline before she had completed her essay. As she sat down, there was a slight ripple of applause, which grew and increased in volume until the building shook as if with thunder. She now felt that the effect of her labors were not lost. Many who had known her only as a happy, innocent girl, were in tears when she concluded, for although she had made no mention of her own woe, it was known to all. For some time the commotion was so great that nothing like order could be restored. At last the choir sang a song, and then Hon. W. A. Strasmore was introduced to the audience. Pauline had so entirely forgotten the lecturer, that the mention of his name startled her as if she had heard it for the first time. As he advanced to take his place at the stand, Pauline's eyes were fastened on him. She forgot all else in that striking resemblance to the man whom she had loved with all her heart, but who had for years slept in his grave. The features, the height and build were almost the same. This man was older and heavier; but just what William might have been at his age.

Why had she felt such unnatural strength to-night? She seemed at peace now, and to have forgotten the heartaches of the day. It seemed that the happiness of the present hung on the words and gestures of that man. His hair thickly sprinkled with gray, and his clear, ringing

voice had about it something reassuring and soothing to the poor, wearied soul. Was day dawning at last?

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TEMPERANCE LECTURER.—HIS STORY.

Oh, weep for those that wept at Babel's stream,
Whose shrine is desolate, whose land a dream;
Weep for the harp of Judah's broken shell,
Mourn—where their God hath dwelt the godless dwell.
Tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast,
How shall ye flee away and be at rest?

—*Byron.*

After the applause that followed the conclusion of Pauline's essay had subsided, the chairman announced the name of Hon. W. A. Strasmore, and in a moment all was breathless stillness. The appearance of this gentleman had already excited curiosity, and impressed the discerning ones of the audience, with the idea that he must be a man with an experience worth telling, if not a history worth recording. The well marked lines upon his features, and that inexpressible light of the eye, could not be without a meaning. They were the chisel marks—the sculpturing of time and conflict. They not only indicate most skillful workmanship, but they tell of the strength and fineness of the material. Just as an artist cannot give expression

to feature or character upon poor marble, so the fires of afflictions and struggles of life leave upon the features of a phlegmatic, aimless soul no well marked lines of battle nor signs of victory.

When Mr. Strasmore began speaking, it was soon apparent from the intonation and modulation of his voice that he was a man of strong emotions and deep convictions. Let us listen to his own words:

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF HUMANITY. — My heart has been greatly stirred, as I have listened to the touching truths and pathetic words of the lady who has preceded me. Yes, woman has been called from her retreat, and thank God, she has nobly responded to the call. If it had not been for her saving hand, I would not be before you now. I used to ridicule the woman's crusade. I did not stop to think what prompted the movement. I was too much steeped in depravity to discover the unseen, but mighty influence by which they were inspired. But that crusade, composed of the bravest women that ever blessed any country, lifted many a fallen brother from the lowest depths, set him on his feet, knelt around him and called down upon him that same influence by which they themselves were moved; and that influence came upon him as the breath of Heaven, permeated his being as a life current, cooled his over-heated blood, cleared his beclouded brain, and made him feel that a new spirit was within him, and hope and courage took the place of despair.

That crusade movement and its angels, lifted me from the lowest fallen estate to which mortal man can plunge—lifted me up from drunkenness and its accompanying vices, to a position where I could see my past sin and folly. They inspired me with a desire for a better life; they gave me that assuring grasp of the hand that told of their friendship. Those pure, noble women took me, sin-polluted as I was, and bade me God speed.

The eloquent lady who has preceded me has asked us to vote for prohibition of the liquor traffic. And in that appeal she only voiced the sentiment of that great army of noble women whom God has inspired with a clearer vision of the situation, danger and remedy than He has the men of the land. She has expressed the sentiment of the myriads of broken-hearted wives and mothers whom rum has crushed.

Her pathetic eloquence has stirred your hearts more than I can expect to do. The pictures she has given you are not fancy sketches, but are drawn from real life. My own experience, and my own sad story are more vivid and terrible than any words can describe. I will give you a chapter in my history before I am through. But for the present I want to call your attention to some reasons why the American saloon should be abolished.

First among the reasons is, the saloon keeper gives *no value for the money he receives.* The grocer gives value in return for your money. You cannot do without groceries. The dry goods merchant gives an equivalent value for the dollars you pay him.

The mechanic gives an equivalent; the butcher, the baker, the jeweler, the shoemaker, the artist, the teacher, the preacher — all give an equivalent for the money paid them. But the goods he gives are not food, nor clothing, nor medicine. They do not add to the comfort of the patron nor help to brighten his home; but just the reverse. They make the purchaser more miserable, and turn his home into a place of weeping and woe.

But if the saloon keeper does not give that which is of any value, he takes money for naught, and therefore robs his patrons. The distilled liquors are rank poisons. But beer contains some nutrition. Yes, some. How much? Leibig, the great German chemist has analyzed it. What does he say about the food properties? He says "A glass of beer contains only as much food as the flour that you could lift on the point of a knife; and it would take nine gallons of the best Bavarian beer to contain as much food as a loaf of bread. Now who wants to make a swill tub of his stomach, and strain nine gallons of beer through it to catch a loaf of bread!"

With these facts before us, we say the saloon keeper, by reducing the value of property, and by taking money for that which is worthless, becomes a robber of the community and of his patrons, and his business should be abolished.

Second. *He injures his patrons.* No one has ever observed the effect that frequenting saloons has upon men, but has come to the conclusion that visiting saloons injures men. Many a rich man has become a pauper and a vagabond by patronizing saloons.

Many an honest clerk, or official, has become dishonest through the agency of saloons. Business men, as a rule, will not employ clerks who habitually drink. A drinking man is so liable to excesses of all kinds, that no wise banker will admit a drinking clerk behind his counter. Why is this? It is simply the world's verdict that the saloon keeper not only robs his patrons of their money, but destroys their moral character. What the world has so generally recognized as true, I need not stop to prove before this intelligent audience. There are too many homes being made desolate all about us for any argument to equal the facts with which you are acquainted. There is that poor, hard-working stone-mason, who had concluded a 400 dollar contract for a job, and next day was to sign it; but in the evening he went into a saloon, the saloon keeper made him drunk, and he lost the job, and his family lost the support. Go ask his wife if the saloon is not a curse! There is that mother, whose son has been enticed into the gilded palaces where Satan, with smiling face and jeweled hand, deals out the broth of hell; — that young man has tasted it, and the serpent of the still has charmed him as a bird is charmed by a snake. At last, the son becomes a drunkard, loses his place, becomes a wreck that nobody will employ, and the widowed mother takes in sewing, or goes to the wash-tub for support. Go ask her if the saloon keeper injures his patrons.

There recently died a man, who, a few years ago, was a great railroad king, employing thousands of men and worth millions of dollars. What did the liquor

dealer do for him? Bankrupted him of his fortune, ruined his health, ruined his fair name, jostled reason from its throne, and ended his career in a maniac's cell. Go ask his poverty-stricken family if the liquor dealer is a blessing or a curse.

Again, six years ago, a wealthy farmer with good reputation, was elected to the Legislature of one of the great northern States. He got to drinking with politicians; became habitually intemperate; and intemperance led to other vices. The story is short—the other day the sheriff sold his property; and the poor victim has gone to hide from his shame in one of the great prohibition States of the West. Who will measure the injury to the wife and children in that case? The other day, in one of the wealthy streets in the city where your speaker lives, you might have seen a poor, miserable man going from door to door, asking for something to eat, and for a little money. Who is the miserable creature? He is what the liquor dealer has left of what was once the Hon. A. B., a most popular statesman; three times he was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, an honor conferred upon no other man in his State. He was then sent to Congress. But the saloon keeper laid his hand upon him, and now he eats cold victuals from the kitchen doors.

Every drinker is injured. The man who drinks little, is injured little; the man who drinks much, is injured much; all are injured who drink. "Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned?" Then the work of the liquor dealer is not merely that of getting money without giving value. It is worse. It adds injury to robbery.

rest, and to stimulate the baser instincts. It is then that men are easily led astray. Boys are thus plunged into the vortex of ruin. It is about the saloon that those women congregate "who flatter with their tongue, but whose steps take hold on hell." Solomon says, "Her house is the way of death." How it was in Solomon's day we do not know; but now she builds her house, or arranges her room, hard by the gin palace, that she may ensnare the youth. In the saloon, the assassin whets his knife; in the saloon, the lustful prepares for rapine; in the saloon, the desperado lights his torch for arson; in the saloon, Satan mixes his "double distilled broth of hell, worse than witches ever brewed," and pours it out for the foolish youth, who drinks it and goes out bewitched, calling evil good and good evil, goes into all the avenues of vice, making Pandemonium out of Paradise.

Can these schools of vice be longer permitted to remain in your midst? Are you not convinced that these outposts of Satan threaten your homes and all you hold dear?

A *fifth* reason for my warfare, my hearers, is that *the saloons are preying upon our boys.* They are preying upon the boys of the land more than a foreign army a hundred thousand strong. It has been well said that "a saloon can no more run without using up boys, than can a saw-mill run without using up logs." We may change the figure and say, "a saloon can no more run without using up boys than a slaughter house can run without using up hogs and cattle." There are a million drunkards in the United States of America. One hundred thousand

of them die annually. As these drunkards drop into the grave, the saloon lays its hands on a hundred thousand boys to fill up the ranks. If a foreign army were in the land with guns and bayonets destroying half so many lives, and wrecking half so much property as the two hundred thousand saloon keepers, we would fly to arms. Our church bells would ring, and all our brave men would arise and drive out the enemy, if it cost them their lives. But here is this great enemy, and we quietly suffer his ravages. "Be we men, and suffer such dishonor?" This enemy threatens the overthrow of our nation, and of our liberties. From the President in the White House, with his cellar full of liquors, to the road supervisor in the corner township, our officials are becoming corrupt through strong drink. The nations that are gone, went down through intemperance and its attendant curses.

In the language of one of the heroes of the Revolution, I ask you, citizens of Staunton, to-night, "Shall we lie supinely down and let this enemy bind us, hand and foot?"

Now when I have shown you that the liquor vender takes money, and *gives no equivalent value*, hence impoverishes his patrons; and, further, that *he injures his patrons* in property, health and morals; and that he *increases the taxes of the sober people*, hence all the community suffers; and, again, that these saloons and liquor shops *are schools of vice;* and, lastly, that they *are using up boys*—when I have shown you these things, you must be ready to say, "We are convinced; the liquor shop must go; never mind the rest of your reasons, we will abolish this foul blot from the com-

munity; we will cut this cancer from the body politic; we will pull down this mill that grinds to pieces our boys; we will put an end to these schools of vice." That is well. Let your zeal harden into actions.

But stay a moment. I must claim your attention to one more reason for prohibition. Because it is the reason of reasons at the bottom of them all, and because you will need to be armed with it when you go into the battle that you are resolving to begin. I refer to God's word. The Bible is full of prohibition. The commandments are all prohibitory. There is not one of them that regulates, licenses or taxes evil. They all prohibit it in the most positive manner. The Decalogue is the epitome of all law. There is no law but its root-principle is found in the Decalogue. Hence, Legislators and Congressmen should take the Decalogue as their formula. If this were done, a law would soon be framed prohibiting this worst evil of modern ages. God speaks in most definite terms when he says, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also."

Now here we see God has pronounced woe, or judgment, against the business of furnishing drink to men. And whom God condemns, men ought to condemn. Again we read, "No drunkard can inherit the kingdom of God." Then the vender ruins his victim for eternity as well as for time, and we must condemn the whole business. I am not preaching a sermon, but giving you a fundamental principle of law. As a member of the law-making body

of your adjoining State, I agree with Blackstone that "statutes that are not in unison with the laws of God, are not laws."

But, it is objected, Christ made wine. Yes, the students of Oxford told John B. Gough that Christ made wine out of water. Gough replied, "That's what I come to tell you, that you may drink all the wine you can find made entirely of water." Paul said, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world stands." We have to do many things for the sake of others. "*Total abstinence is a moral necessity for some, but it is a glorious chivalry for all.*"

But the God of all good has declared that "the way of the transgressor is hard." And the violation of law brings a curse, and a blight. We can not trample the least of God's laws under foot without bringing ourselves into trouble. And yet, the American people allow two hundred thousand men to go into the business of violating God's law in "putting the bottle to their neighbor." They do this for money. This wrong brings all the troubles we have mentioned, and ten thousand more. The people are guilty because they quietly permit it. But much more are we guilty as a nation, in that our national government has gone into partnership in this nefarious business of using up boys and ruining homes. The government has enacted such laws, that it becomes the principal partner in every whisky distillery in the nation. The government sends its inspector or agent, who carries the keys to the distillery, and requires ninety cents as the government's

share of every gallon made. When whisky sells at $1.07 per gallon, the other partners of the distillery only have 17 cents a gallon as their share, and have to pay all the expenses. Is it any wonder that our nation is cursed with crime and corruption, when it is in the liquor business to such an extent as as this? But this nefarious partnership does not stop there. The government goes into every little retail shop in the nation and says to the little proprietor, "If you sell liquor, you must give me twenty-five dollars." No matter if the little proprietor has but one keg of beer and one gallon of whisky, he must give the government twenty-five dollars for the privilege of using up boys. And in this way the government manages to get what some call big pay from the liquor dealers. From these two sources, from the manufacturer and retailer, the government gets about one hundred million dollars a year as its share in the business. What are the results? One hundred thousand boys are used up by the gin-mills every year, and a hundred thousand more fall into line, and begin to keep step with this great march down into hell.

Now let us try our arithmetic a little. 100,000 boys into 100,000,000 dollars; let us see, it goes just 1,000 times. Then the government gets a thousand dollars a head for the boys and men that the gin-murder-mills use up. Is that a good sale or not? What do you say? Would a thousand dollars be a good price for your boy that you love? Shall we count out the ready money, and pass your boy over to the gin-shop to be finished off for the pit of everlasting destruction? Do you object to this, and hold up your hands in

horror? Well, if you do not want *your* boy sold thus, why should you want *mine* sold, or my neighbor's. Some want a tax or license imposed, of two or five hundred dollars. Do you mean by that, that for that sum you are willing that the liquor dealer should sell it freely to your son? You say, "No, not *my* boy." Ah, it's your neighbor's boy, then, that is to be ruined, while you reap the paltry benefit of a few farthings of remitted tax.

Now, if you are opposed to this plan of the government selling boys to the drinkshops at a thousand dollars each, how is it that you can vote for the officers that do this thing? Officers are the agents of the voters; and the law says what a man does by his agents he does himself. What he does by his agents, he is personally responsible for. Then if your vote goes for men who do this business, are you not as guilty as they? If you are a partner in a criminal business, are you not a criminal? And if you appoint an agent to transact this criminal business for you, are you not equally guilty? Men are awaking to this astounding fact by thousands; and many are conscience-smitten because they have unwittingly participated in the sin so long. They are beginning to utter their protest by voice and ballot; and a storm of wrath is brewing for this business and all its defenders.

But, the objector tells us, you can never prohibit the drink shops; they have always been and always will be. He who says this is a traitor to mankind. What! Do you tell us that a foreign foe can come into this land and murder a hundred thousand a year, and we cannot prevent it? In this land whose liber-

ties our fathers bought with blood, shall their children submit to a worse tyrant than King George? If the churches alone would unite, and say in the name of God, the drink mills must be shut down, they would soon be destroyed by law, or by lightning, or earthquake, or by one of the infinite varieties of God's artillery. Who says it cannot be done? This people can do anything in the line of possibilities. When Sumter was fired upon, and the Southern States rebelled, he was counted a traitor who said the rebellion could not be crushed. So, any man who says this foe cannot be conquered, is a coward, or disloyal to humanity's highest good. Our politicians can not be trusted to lead this battle; for, like Eli's sons, they have corrupted themselves, and taken bribes, and can only lead us to confusion and defeat, as Hophni and Phineas did Israel. We must choose for our leaders those known to be men of clean hands and brave hearts.

But another objector says, "You cannot abolish the saloons *now;* you must wait God's time and educate public sentiment." Now, as to educating public sentiment, that is ripening very fast. The sickle is being prepared, and the harvest cometh to-morrow. Four hundred thousand members of temperance orders, and a thousand speakers and writers are preparing the people for battle, and the great Catholic Church is organizing total abstinence bands, and bishops and priests are signing the pledge. You might as well begin to pick lint to dress the wounded, for the battle is imminent; for there is nothing like action to educate sentiment. Words are wind; actions are the

solid facts that tunnel mountains, and bridge rivers, and sweep away every barrier. When King Hezekiah came to the throne of Israel, he found the people full of idolatry, worshipping Baal. Did he spend a lifetime educating public sentiment in favor of prohibiting idolatry? No, he went to work and broke in pieces the image of Baal, destroyed the high places, cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent; and thus, by decided action, he made more sentiment for the true God in one day, than years of mere talk would have done. Nothing educates like action. Withdraw your votes from the bloody men who have propped up this Moloch in our land, and you will teach them more temperance sentiment in the morning paper that chronicles your vote against them, than they have learned in a generation. The day is past for educating sentiment, the battle is too near, this is the time to organize for action.

And as for the other part of the objection, viz., that we must wait God's time, that is little short of blasphemy. It implies that God does not want you to stop this work of slaughter this year, till a hundred thousand souls go down into hell. Do you suppose God is so well pleased with this drunkard-making business, that He wants it to go on a few years longer? That is an insult to the beneficent God of Heaven.

God's time is now. It is always God's time for men to put away evil. It is never too soon to do right.

Thus the speaker waxed eloquent and raised

the enthusiasm of his audience to the highest pitch, as with almost matchless skill he answered one objection after another to the cause of prohibition, until all, except the most obstinate of his audience, were thoroughly convinced that the speaker was right. Many felt that they had never fully seen the subject in its true light before. When the enthusiasm of the audience had reached the highest point, the speaker began to relate his story, which he had promised to give.

My story is a sad one, and it pains me to tell it; and I only do so when I think it may be useful to some one. I know the sadness that often lies with crushing weight upon the heart of the drinker in his sober moments. I know the moments of despair; and I can sympathize with him. But there is help, and there is refuge. For the sake of the poor wife who watches for you in the darkness, will you not seek that refuge? Do not do as I did; till it is too late to plead for the forgiveness of her who trusted her life and happiness in your keeping. Ah, how the remorse eats at my heart! All that I can do cannot atone for the dark, bad past; because I cannot lay the trophies of the honorable life I am now living at her feet. She has crossed the dark river, and I am left on this side. I would gladly blot out the past, but I cannot. But this remorse drives me into a keener hatred of the enemy that blasted my life and destroyed my home. Hate it? hate is too feeble a word. My blood, bones and

mind—body, soul and spirit—every atom of my being revolts at its tyranny. I would not cross the threshold of a saloon to save my right hand.

Mine is the old story of struggling with temptation, and supping with sin, until sin claimed me for his prey.

I cannot remember when I commenced wine-bibbing. My parents came to this country, when I was but a child. My father died when I was still quite young, and when I was just reaching manhood, my mother also died. This loss was heavy. Well do I remember, the resolves I made to honor her memory, as I visited her resting place a week after her burial. Little then did I ever suppose that intemperance would cause me to forget my vows. If some one then had said to me, "You will one day lie in the ditch and suffer delirium tremens," I should have laughed him to scorn. I knew that I liked wine and even something stronger; but I did not see the results of such an appetite. I thought, as every drinking man does, that "I can drink or let it alone;" but be a drunkard, I never shall.

If the first glass would give a man the delirium tremens, alcohol would be left on the shelf to preserve snakes in. But as it is, our only safety is to annihilate it. Better have no pickled snakes, than to manufacture a thing so uncontrollable as alcohol in its various forms.

Not long after my mother's death, I procured a position as book-keeper, with a good salary. I soon entered young society, and there met the maid who became my wife. She was a girl of high moral and Chris-

tian virtues; and she was not slow to see that I was in danger of going to excess, and she often rebuked me for my social drinking. I said all young men did the same. But as she plead more earnestly, I laughed at her fears. Drinkers always ridicule such admonition. I assured her, that I would always lead a sober life; but I did not say, "I will never taste, touch nor handle it again." I said, "When I sow a few more wild oats, I will settle down and be a matter-of-fact sort of a man." Ah, that wild oats business has ruined many a man. It is one of Satan's favorite leading-strings. Young man, do not forget that, "as you sow, so shall ye reap."

In time, this fair Annie Templeton and I were married. When I look back now and think of the years of pure devotion of that true woman, it makes me more determined to be henceforth a true man, and to become worthy of her association in the great future.

Our home was a happy one, just as happy as a neat, energetic, loving wife could make it. I was always met with a smile. She was the best of company; she could teach me wisdom every hour in the day. Then why did I not become wise? Did a demon possess me? Yes, the demon of strong drink was just asserting its claim upon me. Even moderate drinking blunts a man's moral perceptions, so that he is not so capable of appreciating moral principles. This point is not understood by drinkers, but has been scientifically proved by medical men. The American Journal of Inebriety has spent eight years in giving proofs of this; and Dr. T. L. Wright, in

his recent work entitled "Inebriism," proves beyond dispute, that alcohol so affects the brain as to make a man incapable of correct moral action. And I kept my brain so stupified with alcohol that I was incapable of taking in the beautiful truths my wife tried to teach me. They only flitted before me as visions to be forgotten with the sound, instead of appropriated to become a part of my being. So I soon tired of my home, tired of everything, and felt hampered with the possession of a wife and child. I was one of the b'hoys, and wanted to spend my spare time with the b'hoys. The more wild oats I sowed, the more I wanted to sow; which, I believe, is generally the case.

Finally the death of my sweet baby girl seemed to awaken me for a time to a sense of my duty and responsibility. I struggled bravely, but temptations surrounded me, and I was fighting the battle alone. I needed the help of a strong brother, friend, but none came to my relief. Why should they? I had never sought the acquaintance of any whose friendship was worth a straw. When trying to reform I did not tell my dear wife even, that I was making such an effort. Oh, how she would have tried to strengthen all my good purposes, and how she would have implored God's help besides. I did not have the strength to resist the temptation. Every time I passed that saloon which stood between my home and place of business, I felt impelled to go in there. Ah, I was then a groveling slave, but did not know it. When I again yielded to the temptation after my brief reformation, I went the road to ruin at a rapid

speed. My employers were patient with me, but finally my conduct compelled them to discharge me. I became a miserable sot. In those dark days my wife was the only friend I had. She never forsook me. But I often found her in tears, which irritated me. I loathed myself, and after every cent of my money was spent, one night at gambling I got money enough to take me away from all that I had ever known. For weeks I lodged in a garret in New York City, suffering more than tongue can tell. During those weeks the tremens came and went, and I fought the snakes and devils alone. I was thus reaping the harvest from my wild oats. Did I not repent and long to return to my heart-broken wife, and resolve to do so as soon as I could travel? Yes, the little good left in my heart suggested it, but Satan was ready with suggestions; I must not return penniless. And I listened to him that had ruled me so long. I would get a handsome sum and then I would return to her and we would be happy again. I sought work, but I could not keep myself at it.

Finally I abandoned it all, and became a professional saloon-bird—a lounger about places of strong drink, waiting for some one to treat me, and subsisting off of free lunches. How detestable I appear when I think of it. I remained in New York over two years, passing through almost every variety of experience. Finally I and one of my associates started out. We did not know where we should go. We went here and there till we had traveled toward all points of the compass. One December found us in a village in the State of Ohio. We

had not been there long till we heard of the Woman's Crusade movement. How we ridiculed it. One evening a crowd was in the saloon. We had been playing cards, telling stories, and singing songs between drinks, when one proposed a change, and dropping on his knees began imitating the women in front of the saloons, uttering a mock prayer. All but myself cheered him. I thought that was going too far. At that moment a choir began singing right in front of the door, "Rescue the Perishing." I arose and buttoned my coat to go out. When the saloon-keeper saw we were about to leave, he said, "Boys, don't go out. We can stand it if they can." But saying I was fond of music, I walked out, and the others followed me. The song strangely thrilled me. A prayer was soon offered, then a short appeal made, and every word went right to my heart. Did they know anything about me, I wondered. They seemed to speak as though they understood my situation. A general invitation was announced, kindly inviting us to a lecture at the hall. I was leaning against a lamp-post, but my hat was pulled down, and all my past life was coming up before me. There was one alto voice near me that called all the past forcibly to mind. It seemed so like my dear Annie's voice. That singer stepped around so I could see her face, and it looked like Annie's. She came near and laid her hand upon my arm and said, "Surely the way of the transgressor is hard; for your own happiness reverse your life." She was gone almost before her words were finished. The whole choir was gone. They had left quietly as they came. We

all followed. We heard the lecture and all signed the pledge that night. So far as I know, I am the only one that has not broken it. And heaven only knows what a struggle it has cost me to keep it.

As soon as victorious in the first struggle, I sought my wife and home. I found neither. It is too painful to dwell upon. I traced her until she had started in search of me, then I lost trace of her entirely. My poor wife, with our infant son, had tried to find me in my wanderings. I advertised in vain. What suffering she may have endured in her efforts to find me, I never knew. Death may have come to her relief. When means and health failed, and I could search no longer, I settled down almost mad with remorse; but while I despised myself, and shall carry this remorse to the grave, yet I was most thoroughly mad at alcohol and the whole liquor traffic; and as soon as I was able to work, I applied myself with double dilligence, and prayed for that help the women had taught me to trust in; and God not only blessed me with strength to stand, but blessed my labor, blessed me in business, and has opened avenues before me for doing good of which I never knew before. But as I began securing signers for the temperance pledge, and in various ways working for the temperance cause, I soon found that little could be done to save men while the dramshops were so plentiful. If I got ten men in one week to sign the pledge, before another week would pass, nine of them would return to their cups. I began advocating, in all the temperance meetings, that stringent laws should be enforced. So we got a high license law, with a

variety of sections in it for regulating the sale of liquor. But the high licensed liquor made my pledged men just as drunk as the unlicensed liquor did, and they obtained the drinks just as easily as before, although the law said that liquor should not be sold to persons in the habit of getting drunk. The law also made it unlawful to sell to boys under twenty-one years of age, but saloon-keepers disregarded the law, and went on using up boys as before. They even had better success than before, for drink was now sold only by men with sufficient capital to keep finer places, and they bated their hooks for boys more successfully than before. The temperance people could not stay in the saloons to see if the law was being violated, and the saloon-keepers violated *every clause of it every day.* I doubt whether there is a saloon in the United States that does not sell to boys and drunkards all the time, unless while they are watched. I studied the laws we had and the reason they were failures, and I came to the conclusion in a few years, that when a man is mean enough to sell liquor, the only law that will keep him from selling it contrary to law, is a law that will lock up his doors and pour his liquors into the street, as they do down in Maine. Any law that leaves the saloon-keeper with his shop open, and him behind the counter, leaves him in a position to violate all regulations. Suppose your law says he shall not sell to drunkards and minors; he will sell to them continually. Suppose the law says only wine, beer and ale shall be sold. He will pour out whatever the customer likes, in spite of law and temperance sentiment

to the contrary. And his customers, says Judge Dickey, will perjure themselves rather than convict him. Hence the only law that can be well executed is a prohibitory law. When I first made that assertion, I astonished people. But I convinced the temperance people of it so rapidly that I was soon sent to the legislature, and, if God spares my life, I expect to continue the agitation till we shall carry a law as strong as that of Maine. The law that says no intoxicating drinks shall be sold, is a very simple affair in the matter of execution. If the officer finds a man with liquor, he simply takes him to the lock-up, and takes his liquor to the court for testimony. And that settles his guilt at once. But all regulatory laws are next to impossible to enforce. The next time any one says to you that "You could not enforce a prohibitory law if you had it," tell him it is the only temperance law that can be enforced successfully. You cannot easily prove what a liquor dealer sells to a certain customer, nor can you watch him to see that he only sells to proper persons. But prohibition removes that difficulty.

Now my story is told and my lecture is done. If I could be the means of closing these man-traps that have made my life so sad, so they should never blast another home as they have mine, I should feel that I had partly atoned for the sad past. Will you help me in this effort? Was Florence Nightingale a benefactor because she bound up the wounds of the fallen? How much more will he be a benefactor who prevents wounds being made. Will you be that benefactor, by helping to shut down these flood-gates of

destruction? If you stand by and see your neighbor murdered when you can prevent it, the law makes you guilty of his blood. Now, the sober people can stop this work of ruin. Will you do it? If you do not make the effort by your ballot, by your influence, by your money, by your prayers, who will plead your cause in the day of judgment, when the broken-hearted widows rise up and say, you did not save my husband when it was in your power? Who will plead for you then? What will hinder the sentence, "In as much as ye did it not unto these * * ye did it not to me"? I roll the responsibility of the blood of the slain upon you if you do not do what you can. *May God bless you. Good night.*

CHAPTER XXVI.

HERE AND THERE.

To know not earth nor Heaven,
Nor any crimson star,
Can measure losses such
As ours unmeasured are.
To know we would not quench
With any paler wine,
The everlasting thirst
That must be thine and mine.

—*Anon.*

ALL through that lecture Pauline sat motionless as if entranced. The song which concluded the exercises of the evening failed to entirely rouse her from her reverie. She heard some one announce that Mr. Strasmore would lecture on the following evening. From the time he concluded until this announcement was made, she had been sitting like one in a dream. She started at the announcement and her heart beat violently. She would see him, would tell him of that son of whom he knew nothing. She would tell him of his wife and give him the time stained letter traced by her hands. Her thoughts were away back in the beautiful past and she was only awakened to present realities

by Mr. Strasmore being presented to her. She arose and bowed mechanically and stood in a somewhat embarrassing position, while he spoke a few words of encouragement to herself and the President of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and was gone.

Mark Day accompanied Pauline to her home, and as they separated, she said: "Mark, come early to-morrow, for I want you to do me a favor." Mark said he would, and as he went to his home he said:

"Now, she's got something to tell that Strasmore. Lawyer Strasmore was a gentleman and so was this strange father of his till he took to drink. How I pitied him when he told his story. It's not often a strong man shows such emotions. His story is only one more proof that the way of the transgressor is hard. It is a lesson to everybody and though but little that's good can ever be expected of such a wild harum scarum chap like me, I am determined that never under any circumstances shall a drop of liquor cross my lips. Wasn't Pauline's essay a scorcher? I wish the papers would all print it. She is not afraid to call the saloon-keepers by their right name. Oh! I glory in her spunk. If it hadn't a been for Miss Denesmore, I would have been a ruined drunkard by this time. A woman saved me and a woman first tempted Guy. It's strange; one woman overthrew all

parents' teachings, and the true principles of a man's life, and changed his whole existence. Thank goodness, there is not another Maria in Staunton. Such women are scarce. If Guy had not been so fast, he never would have taken that fatal step. He didn't dream he was entering such a hornet's nest; or that he would drag his family down to ruin with him. But he is lost—poor fellow. I don't think the good women can save him as they did Strasmore. I have very little sympathy for Maria, but her child is innocent and I'm sorry for it. The Lord only knows what will become of all of them. They are in Ernest's power, and he will prove a tyrant."

When Pauline reached home, she found her mother waiting for her. She had been with Guy all the evening and reported a favorable change in his condition. He was rational, and had talked with the same freedom he used to show years ago, telling his mother of his temptations and trials, and making firm resolves to do better. The poor boy seemed to get relief in unburdening his heart to his mother. She had at last persuaded him to go to sleep; and when slumber closed his eyes she sat for a long time at his side as she had done in his infancy, longing to take him in her arms and shield him from the many cares, woes and temptations by which he was surrounded.

Pauline told her mother what she had learned

during the evening; and they sat until a late hour talking of the dead, whose life had been so full of promise, and of the last living one whose life had been equally as full of promise.

Next morning Mark called at Mrs. Denesmore's as requested, and Pauline gave him a note for Mr. Strasmore, saying: "If he is at leisure, he can accompany you on your way home, this far."

Mark bowed and hurried away on his errand. In their adversity the Denesmores were unable to keep servants, save one or two faithful domestics who clung to them at the risk of starvation; and Mark had performed many little acts of kindness for Miss Pauline.

Mr. Strasmore was in the reading room of his hotel, when Mark found him, glancing over the morning paper. Mark handed him the note from Pauline, which was simply an invitation to call at his earliest convenience, as she had information of importance for him.

"If you are ready to go now, I will show you the way," said Mark. "It is not far and we can walk very well." Mr. Strasmore, considerably puzzled, announced his readiness to accompany the boy. Pauline could understand something of his anxiety, and entered into the subject as soon as they were seated in her plain, but neat sitting room.

"Have you any proof that your wife and child are dead?" she asked.

"Only that I failed to find them," he answered, while his excitement became more and more apparent. "When I lay prostrated from an illness produced by dissipation, a friend who aided me all he could, learned that a woman and child had arrived on a night train at the town and put up at a hotel. She was suddenly taken ill and conveyed to a charity hospital, where she died without revealing her name or regaining her reason. She had not even registered at the hotel, and was, of course, unknown. The child died soon after the mother; and nothing was known of them except that they were very destitute. It was not my wife, I know now; can you tell me anything of her and our child?"

There was such an expression of eagerness in his face that Pauline felt herself unable to tell the sad story; so she placed in his hand the old time-stained letter William had given her, which made the identity indisputable. The color left his face as he read. He frequently paused to brush away the blinding tears, while he trembled with uncontrollable emotion. When he had read the letter through, he laid it aside, and in a voice husky with emotion asked:

"How came you by this? Is my son alive?"

"Your son gave me that letter on the day I promised to be his wife. But he has been dead for years. He was a grand, noble man, a son of

whom any one might be proud, but he fell by the hand of an unknown assassin from an unknown cause."

"My son cared for by strangers grew to be a man, while I spent my time in dissipation Just Heaven, what a retribution," groaned the agonized father, burying his face in his hands.

Pauline tried to offer comfort, but she knew how vain her efforts were. The only consolation there was to the unfortunate father, was in hearing her talk of that son of whom he had known nothing. As soon as his engagements in Staunton would permit, he went to the home of Mr. Johns, the man who knew more of his boy than any other man. He listened as if he would never tire of hearing these good people talk of his child. While in the neighborhood he made many a pilgrimage to the graveyard where his wife and child whom he had so greatly wronged, slept. King alcohol had wrought all this ruin, and there by the graves of those whom he dearly loved, but had wronged past all hope of human redemption, he vowed eternal enmity to rum. Henceforth he would consecrate his life to combating *The Worst Foe.* All the reward he asked of earthly friends, was that when his pilgrimage was over, he might be laid away to rest by the side of his wife and child.

Leaving the spot which now had grown sacred

to him, he paused as he entered the woods to look back upon it, upon the beautiful monument Pauline had erected to the memory of William, and said:

"Everything has been done for my loved ones by other hands than mine. Not a single work of my affection can anywhere be found, even on their graves. But I can go forth into the world as a missionary and help to redeem other fathers. Oh, if I could only save enough drunkards from ruin it might atone for the past! My story shall be told; and, perhaps, the history of my own sad life may have the effect of bringing others back from ruin." Reader, know you a truly reformed drunkard who is not a worker in the temperance cause? I do not. They may not be lecturers or writers, but in some way, within their sphere, you will find them zealously working for the cause of temperance, if it is no more than to give a word of warning to the unwary. King Alcohol is such a slave driver that men once in his bondage are seldom free. The reformed drunkard is never safe.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ONE MORE ANGEL IN HEAVEN.

"Cease fond nature, cease thy strife
And let me languish into life."

—*Pope.*

TWO years more have rolled by, but affairs in the Denesmore family have grown no better. In fact, they have gradually grown worse. They no longer live in their elegant home which had been theirs for so many years; but in a little cottage, purchased and plainly furnished with what Mrs. Denesmore and Pauline were enabled to save from the wreck. Henry and Mandy, two old faithful servants, remained with them, declaring that they would, under no circumstances, leave them in their distress. The new home was made as attractive and as pleasant as it could well be under the circumstances. Pauline taught a large class in music. All the pupils that she could accommodate were soon selected from among the friends whom she had known in her days of prosperity. Mrs. Denesmore and her daughter could have been happy even in their humble circumstances, had it not

been that Guy still continued his downward course. Both Mr. and Mrs. Day had passed away, leaving an insolvent estate. Ernest had managed to secure a considerable bulk of his father's property, and he had by the most unscrupulous means imaginable, greatly added to that until he was wealthy. Mark was energetic and had added something to the small amount his father had given him. He had commenced life as a master machinist and displayed no little ability. Maria who had intended to have a home with her parents was greatly disappointed to find herself left penniless and utterly dependent on the exertions of her husband's relations, whom she cordially hated. She asked her brother to let her remain at the old Denesmore house as his housekeeper, but he smiled and tauntingly answered that he could not under any circumstances live in that old haunted house. "I would expect to have ghosts for my constant companions."

"What do you mean by saying it is haunted?" Maria asked.

"It is a house haunted with castles. There were a great many castles built in that old place, but all proved to be air-castles, and to one acquainted with the circumstances as I am, it would be disagreeable. Wherever I would turn, I would see Strasmore, Pauline, you and your Guy as you were, and then see you all as you

are, and the walls would re-echo with the groans of broken hearts." Then as if to break off or change the conversation, he said: "I don't think that old lady Denesmore will last long; she is failing fast. I don't like to look at the old saint. Why don't her God come and save her?"

"Hush," interrupted Maria, with a start and a shudder, "you ought to be ashamed of yourself to talk so. I don't believe in their God any more than you, but I have learned of them that their perfect faith is a wonderful comforter. I have seen the old lady's face radiant with happiness, even in her greatest trouble, while reading her Bible. If Christians are right, they are saved and we are lost; if they are wrong, no one is harmed and they are made happy amid all their troubles. If we were not so poor and if Guy ——," she broke down and sobbed.

"You would be a Christian?" said Ernest, with a sneering laugh. "Well, I suppose Guy is the ghost of the Christian he once was ——."

"You are cruel, Ernest," Maria sobbed with her hands over her face. Without noticing his sister's sufferings, he continued:

"Whether Christianity is a reality or a myth, it is powerless to save one from a financial tumble. Pauline was rich, beautiful, proud and powerful in society seven or eight years ago. Where is she now? and she has not near reached the bottom yet."

While the above conversation was going on between the brother and sister, Pauline and the faithful Mandy, grown tired of their labors in repairing the new home, were sitting down for a few moments' rest. The old servant was very thoughtful for a moment, and then looking Pauline in the face, said:

"Your mother is failing fast?"

"Yes, mother is breaking down under the terrible burden of years and her great afflictions."

Then a long silence fell on them and after a struggle Mandy said:

"I don't know, Miss Pauline, but I sometimes think it's best in all these matters to be a little sorter prepared, you know. Life's always oncertain, very oncertain with us all. May be I don't see right, for where there's life, there's hope; but if she does die everybody knows there'll be one more angel in Heaven. We can't always tell when folks die whether they go to Heaven or not, but your mother, everybody knows, is all right when her time comes."

From that time Pauline's anxiety concerning her mother grew greater. That mother slowly wasted away without any perceptible cause, until before they had been a year in their new home, she was confined to her room and then to her bed. Her case puzzled the most skilled physicians, and despite their efforts she continu-

ed to sink lower. Pauline realized from the first that her mother had taken her bed for the last time. Mrs. Denesmore had often talked of the coming dissolution and begged her daughter to be reconciled to the inevitable. Though Pauline often wept in secret she made a great effort to be cheerful in the presence of her mother. The day was just dawning when Pauline, sitting in an adjoining room, heard her mother's voice faintly, yet earnestly breathing a prayer. At the same moment she heard a light foot-step and Guy entered her apartment, his face disfigured with dissipation, but very pale. They both listened and heard their mother's weak, yet clear voice appealing to the throne of grace.

"Dear Father, if it be Thy will, let me enter into that blessed existence which is eternal. Thou alone knowest how weary I have grown of this mortal strife, and how I long to enter that world where no sorrow is ever known, and yet, oh, God! teach me to say from the depths of my soul, not my will but Thine be done. When I see how unworthy I am of thy love and care, I feel constrained to thank Thee that it is so well with me as it is. I thank Thee for my children, and now, Father, that I am soon to leave them, wilt Thou ever be with and comfort them. Thou knowest how hard it will be to Pauline, bereft of a mother on whose love and care she has always depended, but oh, Father,

comfort her and may the sunlight of her faith never fade from her life. Father, save my boy, my poor unfortunate Guy. Thou alone knowest how much he has suffered. He has sinned; he has been lead away from the right, but Thou who knowest how weak the tempted, and how strong the tempter, can forgive. Oh, do forgive, do save!"

Guy could hear no more, but dashed into the room, fell on his knees and sobbed:

"Oh! mother, dear mother, I have embittered your life. I have brought your gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. Can you not be spared a little longer to witness my own redemption. I have been a slave in the power of the most cruel despot that ever reigned over man, and I have struggled in vain against it. I'll not justify myself in this, but if I had married in a different family—. No, I won't say it, mother. Even though a creature of circumstances, I am guilty."

After a moment's silence, the mother feebly said:

"I know all about your temptations. The past cannot be changed, but there is some chance to redeem the future. Ask God's help and constantly keep the image of your children before you. When you gaze upon your baby, think that its deformity is a rebuke to your sin. Try from this on to make the name you give your children an honor to them. Your sister will

need your care, Guy; do not add to her burdens. You know how patient she has been; try and bind up her broken heart, by living an honorable, upright life and avoiding your besetting sin. Stand firm to the right. Remember our parting is short, our meeting forever."

She had gradually grown weaker and weaker until her voice died away in a whisper. Both Pauline and Guy knew that the end was near. At intervals during the day she slept, but all day long her breathing grew shorter and shorter, until just before the sun sank to rest behind the western hills, her soul winged its eternal flight to the abode of the blessed.

A large funeral train followed the body of Mary Denesmore to the cemetery. Guy felt that all eyes were on him, and that he was guilty of murdering his mother. As the coffin was lowered from his sight, groans of agony involuntarily burst from his heart. Many a pitying eye was fixed on the wretched man; and while returning from the grave, a little group freely discussed Guy's wasted life and blighted promises

"He is to blame for his mother's death and the ruin of his family," said one.

"No, not altogether to blame," answered an old man, who was one of the group. "We are all to blame. Rum is to blame. Had there been no intoxicating liquors Guy Denesmore would have been a sober, honorable man, but we

have permitted *The Worst Foe* of mankind to flourish among us, and this is but one of the results; there are millions more."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"WHAT HOLDS ME?"

"Thy Maker's will has placed thee here,
A maker wise and good."
—*Anon.*

BOWED with grief and remorse, Guy went home from his mother's funeral, fully resolving to lead a different life. Alas, how often do we plan our own reformation, and yet allow ourselves to be seized by the tempter and dragged down to ruin and death. Poor Guy, he knew not how weak he was, nor did he dream of the strength of the tempter.

Pauline felt that nearly all the brightness had gone out from this earthly existence. The grief and remorse of her brother almost made her forget her own anguish. When Guy, with heart burdened to overflowing, sank down upon a sofa at her side and wailed: "Oh, why was I ever born?" she felt that she must try to alleviate his sufferings.

"Don't talk so, Guy," she answered. "Don't despair, it is not too late yet for you to win an honorable name. You have erred, and never

have you realized it more than now, still you are on the saving side of eternity. Make a sollemn pledge in the sight of Heaven never to touch, taste, or handle again intoxicating liquors. I will help you, your friends will help you, and God will help you. You will find the same evil influences to contend with, which have dragged you down, the temptation will be before your eyes, and the struggle will be hard and long, but the harder the battle, the greater the victory. I am appalled when I think of the magnitude of this still growing evil; when I remember you as you were and think of you as you are—when I I think what we might have been had it not been for this evil, I feel almost inclined to swear eternal enmity to rum. I am powerless to save you, brother; you alone can make your life what it should be. Brother," Pauline's voice was very faint and trembling, "now is the time to embark on the voyage of safety."

A long silence followed. The baby awoke and began to cry. Pauline took the little creature from its cradle and held it in her arms to try to quiet it. Guy watched them both. The poor afflicted baby had never been named. The child seemed a living rebuke to its father's sin and mother's folly. Every time Guy looked at the withered wrinkled features, or watched those spasmodic twitchings of the face and writhing of the whole body, like one in a fit of delirium tre-

mens, he keenly felt this rebuke. But Maria was too selfish to ever find any fault in her own acts. She was sure she had not been the cause of Guy's turning out as he had. She did not want him to be a drunkard, and she had scolded and fretted and cried herself into hysterics, because he would drink. One day Mark had said to her:

"This is what you get for urging Guy to take his first glass." She quickly answered in a high state of ill-humor that it could be no harm for him to sip a little wine just out of politeness to their guests. She had no idea it would ever make a drunkard of him.

"But it was his young wife who first held the tempting cup to the lips of her husband," said Mark, impatiently. "You deserve it."

"Hush, shut your mouth!" screamed Maria. Pauline, laying her hand on Mark's shoulder, said:

"Don't, Mark; don't cast reflections. It is hard enough for Maria to bear now. She little dreamed what the end would be, or she never would have offered that first glass."

"No! she didn't know how it would end; but now she can see what the end is liable to be. But she keeps wine and stimulants on hand to keep up her strength. Bosh! Guy needs liquor just as much as she does," and Mark left the room.

But to return to the present, Guy watched Pauline and the baby for some moments, when his own little Pauline came into the room and going to her father's side, she fixed her eyes affectionately on his face. Guy, with little Pauline on one knee, took the afflicted baby from the arms of his sister, and kissing its wrinkled forehead, said:

"Pauline, I have struggled hard to throw off this slavery; Heaven only knows how much I have suffered or what a slave I have been. If there is any good left in me yet, by the help of Heaven and all the will power I possess, I will never—never—fall again."

The pledge was given with so much firmness and earnestness that the wife and sister were full of hope that he would keep it. Pauline felt that a ray of happiness might yet be in store for her.

Childhood soon forgets sorrow, and little Pauline who had been shocked at the awful solemnity of death now went to a corner and began building a house with her blocks. Maria watched her with a hope almost akin to joy; and Guy listened to her innocent prattle with a dread fear of evil. He knew what he had before him. Would he be able to conquer *The Worst Foe*, or would he again fall into the snare of the tempter?

"No! I will never—never—fall again," he mentally declared. Pauline, watching the western horizon whose ruddy glow indicated the re-

treat of the sun, predicted a brighter future for all. That day of mourning ended in one of thanksgiving and prayer for help to keep sacred resolutions.

It is easy to fall, but difficult to regain the position once held. The lower the fall, the more difficult to regain the former footing; yet Pauline had hope. Guy needed encouragement, and she made his cause her own. In the months which followed, she received her reward in the knowledge that her brother was leading a life of sobriety. He seemed to have returned to what his early life had promised to be; and with the greatest hope, Pauline prayed that the prospects might not be blighted. None knew of Pauline's trials, save her young friend, Mark. Who was better acquainted with Mark than herself? He also knew that but little dependence could be put on Maria, for all who could not be made instrumental in the accomplishment of her own ends, were discarded as worthless.

Pauline had fixed principles of right and wrong, which no power or circumstance could change; and, although desirous of peace, she would not swerve from the path of duty. Every roughness jarred on her sensitive nature; but all this was nothing compared to her brother's loss. Now that he was slowly retracing his steps, she turned a deaf ear to her own perplexities, thanking God that it was as well as it was.

One evening Mark happened in, when Maria, to use his own expression, "was on a tare." She never tried to control her temper on account of his presence, but went on, upbraiding Pauline and calling her a prudish old maid whom every body disliked. Having given vent to her feelings in a final burst of temper, Maria left the room, and Mark, looking after her with a sigh of relief, said:

"I am glad the hurricane is past. I have been trying to think of a storm proof shelter for you, Miss Denesmore."

"It is well you did not speak, Mark. Such things only make matters worse. I have not always been silent, though every time I have spoken back, I have degraded myself."

"What makes you put up with it, Miss Denesmore?" asked Mark. "Why don't you find another home? You might have choice of homes among your pupils. As long as your mother lived I could understand why you bore so much, but now I can't see what holds you."

"Mark, if I should go away and Guy should again fall, I would feel that I was to blame. I have faith in him, but I know he is fighting a terribly fierce and cunning foe, and he needs my help to combat this evil. Whenever he returns to this place he calls home, he needs me, the baby needs me and my duty is very plain—that is what holds me.'

"And your life will be sacrificed. In every reformation there have been martyrs. William Strasmore was a martyr to his sense of right, I shall always believe; and you will waste your life and talent here for the interest of one, at least, who is too selfish to appreciate your kindness."

Pauline was unmoved from her purpose. Her duty was plain and she was sure her life's efforts would not be without avail. When she had dismissed Mark and returned to her own room, there was an indefinable longing in her breast for her own peculiar idols enshrined in her heart. Despite all her determined resolutions she could not but ask herself:

"Am I to always live this way? Are my days to be passed without the world being any better for my having lived in it?"

The sound of her brother's voice who had returned drowned all longings, and she was soon with him talking encouragingly of the present and hopefully of the future. When she retired to rest, she thought:

"If I can but redeem Guy, will it not be a glorious work, and will I not feel that my life has not been lived in vain."

But little time was left poor Pauline for longings and regrets. Overwhelming disaster seemed to engulf her, and she was all alive to the actual woes by which she was surrounded. Had

it not been for the shortness of those dark days, she would have sunk into the whirlpool, and been engulfed forever from mortal vision.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE FINAL WRECK.

"Now conscience wakes despair
That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse: * * *

—*Milton.*

THE snow had covered the grave of Mrs. Denesmore the grass had grown green; the flowers had blossomed and completed their mission; Jack Frost had lightly touched them, and now they hung their drooping heads as if awaiting the parting benediction of the season. The beauty of nature seemed to have grown more refined. Autumn had lent her golden tints and voluptuous maturity to the charms of spring and summer. Nature had done her part well, not only to preserve the beauty, but the health of those who had much abused her. She had dealt justly with Guy Denesmore. The misspent years of his life she could not restore; nor his strength or physical vigor, as it was before those golden moments, studded with diamond stars, were buried in the wine cup. But

when Guy had said, "I will once more be a man," and called on all the good left in him to assist him in the struggle with his appetite that he might overcome the temptations which beset him, she rallied all her remaining forces and brought them to the grand change. Victory seemed assured.

Physical nature is the most affectionate mother, the most loving and obedient of all God's servants. She toils as faithfully with man today as she did with Adam. Guy soon grew to enjoy sleep at the regular hours for slumber, and awoke refreshed with newly-added energies each morning. He did not reflect that nature kissed his eyelids down and, while he slumbered, was busily at work binding up the broken tissues, and clearing away the work of decay accumulated by alcohol. He was wide awake to the consciousness that he was warring with the enemies that environed him. His name was frequently offered at the throne of grace, but he had long since ceased to be a supplicant there. He constantly asked himself:

"Is there a God who answers prayer?"

He could not believe it, else why had he fallen? Scarcely dared he to breathe his secret thoughts. His early training and the inclination of his young heart had been religious, and he was not yet so bold as to discard the faith of his forefathers. He dared not scoff at Christianity, for once it had

brought him happiness, and he still held in sacred respect those who adhered to the belief, even though in his own heart doubt had taken the place of faith. At first he felt the guilt of sin, that he was responsible. He tried to get away from the Lord, and set up many excuses for his own conduct. Then when Satan came and whispered in his ears that "God does not take care of his own," he began to doubt. Faith, though dethroned, lingered near, knowing that if she entirely left him, his ruin was inevitable. While God's attributes Faith, Hope and Charity still hovered about the despairing soul, Satan continued to whisper:

"God cares not for his children." Alcohol had stupefied his brain and so weakened his resolutions that he had not power to say:

"Get thee behind me, Satan. God has placed me here a free moral agent, and I will dethrone my tyrant. I will go on the Lord's side and combat the devil in every form." But instead he seized on the skeptic's fatal chord and declared, "I will believe that only of which I have visible proof."

This infidelity had come into the mind of Dr. Denesmore, not as the result of his own seeking, but like a miasma comes into the system when the air one breathes is freighted with it. It came into his mind imperceptibly. He *sought* scientific and medical knowledge, but did not

seek this mental disease. People rarely seek disease. They locate where the air is pregnant with it, and then breath it in, seldom knowing how or when. So Dr. Denesmore had located in the Day family, where the mental and moral atmosphere were poisoned with the most subtile infidelity, that had imperceptibly become a part of his thought and feeling, he knew not how nor when. This had broken down the tissues of his mental and moral character and robbed him of the strength and courage born of faith and hope.

Although he had grown skeptical before his mother's death, neither she nor Pauline knew of it. Anxiously the lovers of temperance and humanity watched his course. Pauline's confidence had almost reached that state where her mind could get a season of rest. Maria began to lay golden plans for the future in which her own selfish aims were kept in view.

There were some good people in Staunton who said to themselves that it was only a question of time. Guy's house was builded on the sand, and lacking the solid foundation of faith would fall. These prophesies failed to reach the ears of his anxious family and they did not realize that a dark cloud hung over their heads ready to burst in all its fury.

* * * * * * * *

The family at the little cottage are partaking of their evening meal. The face of Pauline is

grave and solemn. Guy looked at her and then at his wife. There is not that peace and content on the faces of the humble family which was promised in the past. At last Pauline broke the silence by saying:

"Do you remember what this day is the anniversary of?" fixing her pale anxious face on Guy and Maria. Maria folded her napkin carefully and answered:

"Let me see. It has been four years since Guy brought me a silk until this afternoon. My wardrobe has become downright shabby."

Pauline was pained and a disappointed look came to the face of Guy. After a moment's disappointment, he said:

"Pauline does not mean that. It is a year today since mother was laid to rest."

For a moment Maria hung her head and something like a faint flush overspread her face, then she said:

"Certainly, Pauline spoke of it the first of the week, I ought to have remembered it."

"One year," repeated Guy slowly at the same time heaving a deep sigh. "Can it be possible that mother watches over us? Is there a home hereafter?"

"Why, Guy!" exclaimed Pauline, in pain and astonishment. "We cannot know whether our mother watches over us or not, and often I have thought not. Her heart would bleed if she

witnessed the trials of her children and sorrow cannot enter Heaven. But there can be no doubt of a hereafter. How can you doubt it? We are only here on probation; and we should think well how we spend our golden moments, that we may be the better prepared to enter Heaven which is eternal."

"I used to believe the same myself, but bitter experience has taught me that, live as just as we may, when the time to err comes we will do it in spite of ourselves. Though only creatures of circumstances, we receive the condemnation of the world. Life is a drama. We may do what we will behind the scenes, act ever so wisely or prudently; yet when the curtain rises for us to appear on the stage, we mechanically play the part assigned us, and the role the players assume frequently surprises the world. But fate has assigned us our parts and we may just as well take them when the time comes as not."

"Who is the stage manager?" asked Pauline, solemnly. "If life is a drama and the world a stage, there must be a stage manager."

"Fate manages the affair."

"But if there is no hereafter, why should fate go to so much trouble for us? Why not let us alone in blissful ignorance, instead of parading us before a gaping world to play a part unsuited to us? Besides, if fate alone ruled the affairs of mankind, we have nothing whatever to do with

our future destiny. Were there not an immortal soul which incites in every human heart a desire to do noble deeds, to be an honor to himself, and in honoring his own name, to honor mankind, we could not hope for the future, nor feel remorse for the past; we would be as the brutes, we would not think even of fate. If you believe in fate, you believe in power. Why not believe in God as that power, and man as His subject?

"Do you believe in fate, Pauline?"

"I know there is a divinity that shapes our destiny, over which we have no control. We are all born to die, but Christ redeemed us to eternal life which can be ours if we choose. When your little girl was born I asked myself is she come into a world of disappointment and woe, or will she choose eternal life. I decided that I would do all I could for her. I thought of you, Guy. She was yours and you would not choose death for her. The iniquities of the father are visited on the children even to the third and fourth generation. You may call this fate, but aside from what we inherit, fate has nothing to do with us, and man is even able to defy fate, and by the help of God overcome inherited appetites. Jesus broke the bars of death and man can enter life eternal if he will."

"If life is a drama, I think the devil must be the stage manager," interposed Maria.

"If we believe in a devil, we must also believe in a God. Satan sometimes makes his victims play a role to which they are not adapted. The devil never does a noble act, and he invites you to do evil acts. There are others inviting you to choose the part they have set for you. Their Leader laid the foundation, and lives in the heart of all that are good. His commandment covers the ground. 'Love the Lord thy God, with all thy soul, might and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.' Brother, you know what the enjoyment of that love is. Satan had no power over you, save the power of the appetite, that could have robbed you of that enjoyment. Intemperance brought you nothing but misery after you became its slave."

Was not Pauline right? Is there not as much reason to believe in the personal character of a God as of a devil? And is it not much more reasonable to believe in a God who made the heavens and the earth than to believe in the indefinite nothing that some people call fate? What is fate? Who can tell? Is it an unseen power of nature that acts upon persons and things to control them? Is it not more reasonable to believe in an intelligent personal force, and to name that force God, than it is to believe in a blind, unintelligible force that some name Fate? The greatest scientists of the world say, "There is an unseen force at work in the

world that no science has yet discovered." Why can they not discover this force? They are aware of its presence, but cannot find it. The Christian says this force is God. Three thousand years ago in the days of Job the question was asked, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" This recent confession of the great scientists seems to prove the Scripture declaration that, "Man by wisdom knew not God." How then do Christians know God? They say that God reveals himself to them in a way that he does not to unbelievers. They quote from their Bible, "No man knoweth the Father save the Son; and he to whom the Son doth reveal him." They say God by his Spirit dwells in the believer. And there does seem to have been in believing Pauline an unseen sustaining power that was not in her unbelieving brother and his unbelieving wife.

There was a silence of half an hour's duration. Guy walked the floor and sighed deeply every few moments. Pauline's lips quivered, and she could not say another word. She had not said half she desired to say to her brother on the subject, and yet she dared not upbraid him lest she should drive him farther from her. The advice of William Strasmore seemed at this moment to be ringing in her ears, "Never waste a golden opportunity." Her brother had lost his faith, was a doubter, an infidel, and on the bor-

der of that dark land of uncertainty called skepticism. She would have given worlds then to redeem him, but dared not argue with him lest she make him more obdurate.

At last Guy went to his little daughter who was playing with her doll, took her chubby face between his hands, kissed her, and left the house. He paused a moment when on the street as if irresolute, but was soon walking down the street toward his place of business.

Pauline Denesmore's brain was in a whirl. She had seen her brother in delirium tremens and on the border land of shadows, but the agony of such a sight was nothing compared to the knowledge that he had become an infidel. She still hoped that his faith would make him whole, and prayed that God's mercy might yet save him. She realized that if he was again tempted to drink, he would, without the saving grace of God, be lost. If he lived a life of temperance there was some hope yet for him, but alas! one of the strongest motives to temperance was now taken away. If he fell again, there would be less shame and remorse, and no religious hope to give him aid. She closed her eyes against such grim forebodings and silently prayed for the future.

The words of his sister strangely moved Guy Denesmore, not that he believed anything she had said. Satan still held him in subjection and whispered, "There is no God." He knew he

was not so happy now as when he believed in the religion his parents had taught him. Even while he condemned himself for the ruin of his family, he said:

"There is no God,—if there had been, why did not He save me?" He passed the saloon in which he had spent so many hours in debauchery. Suddenly he seemed possessed of a strong desire to enter it. His eyes were lifted heavenward. Alcohol had bleared his vision, and he turned them toward those dark screens. He knew that within were men who, ashamed of their nefarious business, carried it on behind screens and blinds. There men entered, and hired the saloon-keeper to take their honor, wealth and good name. He thought of all this, and passed this gate of earthly hell, but the thirst and burning desire were so rapidly increasing that he knew he soon must yield. Satan whispered, "Fate decrees it, it 's useless to fight longer." At this moment a second temptation in the form of a saloon presented itself, and he rushed madly in and was lost to view behind those dark screens which hide from the face of man many a heinous crime.

* * * * * * *

It was a dark night. The rain had poured down all day, and now at midnight the windows of Heaven seemed opened, and a deluge poured upon the earth. The lights in the cottage were turned low. The pale face and anxious looks of

Pauline as she walked to and fro in the room, told of her anxiety. Maria was sitting at a window, the curtain of which she drew back, at intervals of every few moments to peer out into the darkness. Her eyelids were blistered with weeping, and shivering with cold and dread she sighed:

"Oh! the rain, it makes me so nervous! One o'clock!—what can keep him?"

Pauline paused in her walk, looked down on the poor, crouching figure at the window. Taking a seat by the side of the miserable wife, she put her arm affectionately about her and tenderly said:

"Poor Maria, I pity you, and I pity little Pauline. How thankful we should be that the little boy went to Heaven six months ago. What we then thought an affliction is really a blessing. I pity myself, but more than all, do I pity poor, misguided Guy. Oh, Heaven! is there not something that can yet be done to save him? There are others who will help us if they can."

Looking out of the window, Maria sobbed: "I see no way. Oh! I wish I could die and leave it all."

"I do not want to die," Pauline answered. "I want to live to see this evil wiped away from the face of our land, or in a fair way to be trampled under the feet of humanity."

The long hours dragged wearily by. Morning dawned, but no Guy came. Pauline could not

wait longer. The rain had now ceased; and with Guy's little child, she went forth in search of the fallen one. We would that the picture of this sister and child in search of the lost brother and father, and the form of the poor, half-demented wife at home, could be placed before every man who contemplates voting for whisky or whisky men. Maria watched them out of sight, and turned slowly from the door with a sickening foreboding at her heart.

* * * * * * *

A night of debauchery spent by Guy Denesmore was nothing uncommon. In the dark hours just before the dawn of morning, he started home. He went to his office, where no patients ever entered now, and entering it, dropped into a chair and fell asleep. Some strange, fatal spell seemed on him, and try as he would, he could not throw it off. There seemed no escape from the inevitable ruin which threatened him. He had long since lost all hope. In the gray twilight of early morning he awoke with a start. He was cold and shivering, and it was some moments before he could realize where he was. There was a gnawing pain of remorse at his heart, and he was in the depths of despair. Though his senses were dulled, his recollection was keen and he groaned in his misery.

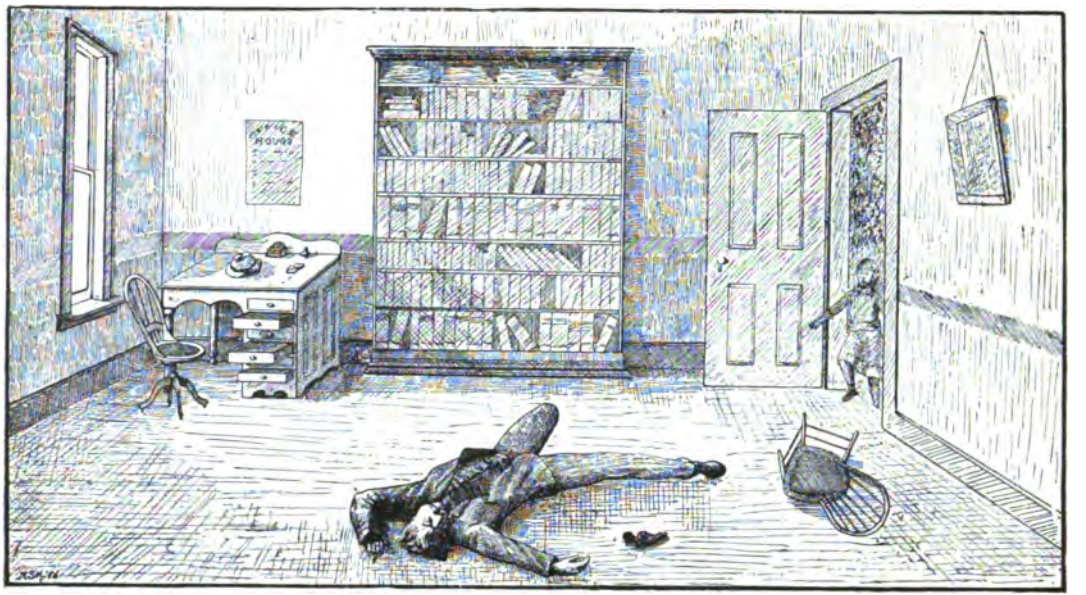
'I am a poor, miserable fool — a slave, and there is no help—no hope. All is wan despair, here and hereafter."

He dare not look into the future for redemption and Heaven had disappeared before his atheism. Matters had been steadily growing worse for months. He thought of his wife, his child, his sister and his own misery, and then his wild brain tried to escape, but there was no escape. In his maddening desperation he went to his desk and opened it. There was all he wanted, but he would be found and a stomach pump brought to save him from eternal oblivion to this life of woe. Those demons would not want him to escape—they preferred to see him paraded before them for their own entertainment. He must be quick or he would be cheated yet of that rest he so long had desired. He opened drawer after drawer as these wild thoughts ran riot through his brain. At last his eyes caught sight of the pistol for which he was searching. He hailed it as a welcome friend, and chuckled with the delight of a madman. It was loaded and in good order. He must be quick or the demons of the damned would come——

When Pauline with the child reached the office she was surprised to find the door unlocked. The child ran in and cried:

"Oh, papa, papa are you asleep?"

Pauline entered, and saw her brother lying on the floor, his face downward, and the fatal pistol near his hand. She gave utterance to a piercing shriek, and fell insensible to the floor. When



SUICIDE.

The child ran in and cried: "Oh, papa, papa, are you asleep?"—See page 310.

she regained her consciousness, Mandy was bending over her, and a physician and Mark stood near. She was in her own bed, and for a moment could hardly comprehend what had happened. Maria's wailings brought it all back to her mind. She afterwards learned that her scream and the cries of the child had brought a policeman to the office, and she had been quickly conveyed to the little cottage. Awaking to the awful realization of what had happened, Pauline buried her face in her hands and cried:

"Oh, my brother—my poor brother—lost, lost—forever lost!"

CHAPTER XXX.

HE MEETS HIS DESTINY.

"And on that cheek, and o'er that brow
So soft, so calm, so eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent."

—*Byron.*

"YOU WOULD better join our party, to-morrow, Day. You have never beheld more beautiful scenery and you will find it a gay little party, one which will drive dull care away. A great many of our young folks will be going."

"I appreciate your manifest interest in me; and I will be most happy to accompany your party. When do you start?"

"At six o'clock. You can have a seat in my carriage. I will call for you."

"Thank you, I will be ready. Good evening."

"Good-by, Mark, I will be sure to call;" and bowing, the last speaker hurried away.

Mark Day remained standing a few seconds, on the long porch in front of his hotel, and then turning about went to his room. "I feel guilty,"

he sighed, "when I think of joining a pleasure party. Poor Maria and Pauline! they can take no pleasure—but Pauline charged me strictly to have a good time, and that I must regain my appetite. I guess I've done that, for it has not been very far away from me. Yet I would rather not go with that party. Snow would not have asked me had he known that not two months since my sister's husband, a man of whom I was once so proud, committed suicide."

He ceased talking while a shudder passed over his frame. Somehow he always shuddered when he recalled that horrible scene. "This is Prohibition Kansas," said Mark to himself sadly, "and to let them know that my family has been ruined by strong drink would be a stigma on myself. Thank Heaven, I am in one State where it is disreputable to drink! and even though drinking is done on the sly, it is not so destructive as the bold and open sale in my native State. Licensed rum holes do not confront us on every hand to corrupt the morals of the youth. Like any other criminal, the liquor vender must carry on his nefarious business in secret."

For a few years past Mark had labored and studied beyond his strength. His physician had advised him for some time to rest, and take a short trip into some of the border states or territories. After Guy's sad death, Mark was prostrated from a fever doubtless produced by the

shock and the wasted condition of his system. His employers counseled together and by the advise of his physicians it was determined to send him away. Mark was an exemplary young man, and had a host of friends. All of them joined his relatives and employers in urging him to take a tour in the great West. Pauline and his sister were perhaps the strongest in their solicitations. A party of sportsmen were going to Iowa, and he joined them. When they were ready to return, he concluded to go still farther west, and wended his journey to Colorado. While living among the mountains, he met Fred Snow, who persuaded him to go with him to his home in Kansas. Mark, having decided to go on the picnic excursion, set himself about writing letters to Maria and Pauline. His letters were lengthy epistles, for he had much to tell. The wonders of the West were new to him, and he described the magnificent scenery with a glow of enthusiasm. "I hardly expected to come here," he wrote, "but I have been fully repaid for this visit. This is a beautiful country, the towns are new, healthy and moral, without the debasing rum holes to delude and degrade the good people here. When you write, try to send me the address of the Misses Hammond, and I will endeavor to hunt them up."

While Mark was writing, his new found friend was interesting himself in his cause. Two young

ladies were seated on a rustic bench beneath a large shade tree, and Snow had joined them. One of the young ladies was bright and fair, with a pleasant smile and winning way. The other, about the same age, was dark and beautiful, with an air of dignity which repelled strangers and welcomed friends. When Fred joined them, they all at once began talking of the morrow.

"We are going to have a capital time, but there is one favor I want you to grant, Miss Lillie," said Fred.

"I grant a favor?" she asked, her eyes growing round with surprise. "Of course, if I can, I will—what is the favor?"

"Take a seat in our carriage, and let your sister ride with Mr. Templeton."

"Oh, no, Mr. Snow. Much as I would like to accommodate you, I could not think of doing that." Her companions laughed, and the other young lady whose name was Ida Frost, said:

"Why not ride with us, Lillie, just this once. Of course we know that you love your sister and would like to be in her company; but this is an extra occasion—let Mr. Templeton have the pleasure of her company. You know it would make him extraordinarily happy, for much as he likes you, Lillie, this is a case where two is better company than three."

"You are mistaken," Lillie answered with piquancy that was pleasing. "When I am along

I do all the talking, and Mr. Templeton can study the beauties of nature undisturbed. If he were with Deena, he would have more than half the talking to do himself."

"He can do it, never fear," broke in Fred.

"Now, Mr. Snow, why do you want me to ride in your carriage? I believe there is a conspiracy on foot."

"I will admit the truth. When I was among the mountains, I formed the acquaintance of an excellent young fellow. He was a little quiet at first, but really entertaining when I drew him into conversation. I had this excursion in view when I persuaded him to accompany me home. He is a young man about my own age, and he, you, Ida and I, would make a very pleasant quartette."

"It is a very nice little plan, I must admit, but I cannot think of giving up my place in Mr. Templeton's carriage."

When Fred and Ida went away, Lillie entered her own house. Deena was absent and Lillie spread the cloth and prepared the supper for herself and sister. As she was busy with her work, she ruminated:

"Of course it would give Mr. Templeton great pleasure to have a ride alone with Deena, and Deena thinks a great deal of him, though she is so distant. I cannot understand her. I believe I will ask her when she comes."

But when she did come, Lillie told her tea was ready, and she hurried Deena into the neat little dining room, and soon forgot the subject. Lillie's tongue rattled away at a rapid rate as only a merry girl's can.

"I want you to taste my pears, Deena," she said. "I think they are just as nice as can be. I thought I would never learn preserving, but I guess I will make a success of it yet."

From this the conversation branched off into house-cleaning, preserving, and canning fruit, then drifted off to plants, birds, books and schools, but not once was the name of Mr. Templeton mentioned. The matter had either slipped from Lillie's mind, or she was afraid of wounding Deena's feelings.

The next morning when Fred Snow's carriage drove up, Lillie went to the door expecting to see a stranger seated by Fred's side, but no one was there.

She cared nothing for this stranger, and still she could not but have a little curiosity concerning him. Who was he, and what was he like? When she was with Mr. Templeton and her sister driving to the picnic, she told them of the stranger of whom Mr. Snow had spoken. It was very little she knew, for she could not even tell his name. Mr. Templeton listened very attentively, only saying when she paused for breath:

"Indeed!"

After their arrival at the picnic grounds, and the baskets were stowed away, Deena was sitting by Ida's side, when Fred Snow, throwing himself down on the grass before them, said:

"I suppose Miss Lillie told you about our new guest."

"No, I think not."

"I met a young gentleman last week while among the mountains, and invited him to come home with me. I wanted him to see our beautiful country and become acquainted with our people, and so decided that we would pass a day in the country. Here he is, waiting for us."

As he finished speaking, there came up a young gentleman with manly form and dark eyes, who bowed and smiled. Deena Hammond thought there was something familiar in his manner, and when Mr. Snow introduced him as his friend Mr. Day, her heart gave a great bound and stood still. Mark was also a little bewildered when introduced to the Misses Hammond. As the gay young folks began talking, Mark asked himself:

"Can that lady be Miss Deena Hammond. If it is, she of course knows all about poor Guy. I believe I'll ask her if she once lived in Staunton." He turned to look at her, but her face was averted. For a few moments he tried to catch her eye but in vain. "This lady is really better looking than was Deena Hammond."

He tried to draw Miss Hammond into conver-

sation, but she seemed averse to him, and Mark decided not to press his notice upon her. He directed his attentions to Miss Ida, whom he found a most agreeable companion.

During the day Mark was introduced to the entire company, making a favorable impression on all save Deena Hammond, who sighed and said to herself:

"Why does a Day again cross my path? Am I doomed to have my sky darkened forever by some one of that name?"

It seemed a relief to promenade with Mr. Templeton, and somehow she found herself involuntarily clinging to him whenever Mark came near. Why should she shrink from Mark Day? Surely there was not a more innocent young man in all the country. Mark and Lillie, Fred and Ida formed a happy little group to themselves, and as the former couple finally took a little stroll about the pic-nic camp, Ida whispered to Fred:

"I hope Mr. Day will not decide to take Lillie away. You will be to blame if he does."

"How quickly girls jump at conclusions! What would Mark and Lillie think if they knew of those dark suspicions?"

With a deep blush, Ida responded:

"It is you who jump at conclusions. I only used the subjunctive if, and you talk as if it was I instead of yourself, who had been maturing plans."

They soon joined their companions, and the four formed a merry group during the remainder of the day. Deena went home in company with Mr. Templeton, Lillie having been prevailed upon to ride back in the carriage with Ida, Fred and Mark Day. On their return, Mark learned from Lillie that they once lived in Staunton. He was surprised that when she learned he was from the same town, that she asked no questions about the people there, and in fact she seemed very anxious to avoid discussing questions that would be likely to revive memories of childhood. Lillie reached her humble home all aglow with pleasure and enthusiasm.

"Oh, Deena, I never had such a day of fun," she cried when she met her sister. "Mr. Day is just splendid. He is from Staunton, and is well acquainted with your friend Pauline, and seems to like her just as well as you do. He and Fred, and Ida and I, are going off to-morrow to have a picnic by ourselves. Fred is so glad that my school doesn't commence for three weeks. I am too, for we will all have a gay time until it opens." Her eyes sparkled with anticipated happiness. Deena noticed it, and it was the signal for a great struggle in her breast. Should she dash the hopes and happiness of poor Lillie to the ground, or must she wait, trusting in Heaven to teach her that no Day was to be trusted? Long after she had retired, Deena Hammond

tossed on her sleepless couch asking herself what she should do under the circumstances.

That evening Fred Snow was astounded to learn that Mark had met the Misses Hammond before. He told of first meeting Lillie when she was a little prattling child.

"Why, that is quite a romance," cried Fred when he had learned all, "and you met her here after so many years when you never expected to see her again."

Lillie Hammond was mingled with the dreams of Mark Day on that night. He also saw the cold expression and strange frown on Deena's face, which had puzzled him so. She seemed to repel him, and one glance of her eyes chilled him. Every time Lillie came floating toward him in his dreams, Deena Hammond, who seemed jealously guarding her sister sprang between them, and left only her own sad, white face before him.

CHAPTER XXXI.

LILLIE AND MARK.

"'Oh, what!' the voice enquired again,
"Hath wrought this change, so sad and strange,'"

TWO happy weeks for Mark and Lillie had passed. Mark spoke of returning home in a few days, and noticed with some degree of pleasure the almost imperceptible shadow on Lillie's face when he mentioned the subject of his departure. She was arranging a button-hole bouquet, and Mark complimented her taste. At his request she pinned it on his coat. Their conversation was far more interesting to themselves than it would be to the reader, so we will omit it.

Deena Hammond, who was watching them from the latticed, vine-covered window, heard every word they spoke, and noticed with alarm those tender glances which spoke much more than words. A look of distress settled on her face, and when they went away to Ida's house, she said to herself:

"My duty is very plain now. For two weeks I have put off saying what I ought to have said

at the beginning of this acquaintance. I knew it—I felt it from the time they first met, that their friendship would become something more. He talks fair—so did the other; but he would stoop to anything to accomplish his purpose. I must watch him. My precious Lillie shall not suffer as I have."

When Lillie Hammond returned that evening, she was not a little alarmed at the paleness of her sister's face.

"Deena, are you sick?" she cried, as she gazed at her. "What can I do for you? I have not noticed this before, but I expect you have been ill all along. Let me go for a doctor."

"No, no, Lillie, a doctor couldn't cure me," said Deena, laying her hand on the shoulder of her impulsive sister. "I am troubled, Lillie. Never under any circumstances consent to a matter of secrecy." Lillie Hammond fixed her astonished eyes on her sister's face, and was dumb with wonder. Deena, strangely agitated, continued: "I thought because I did nothing dishonorable, that secrecy would be romantic, but oh, I have paid most dearly for my folly. Life has for years been a burden. When we came out here in this unknown world, and so many friends sprang up about us, I thought the past forgotten—buried forever, but it has followed me—I will never be free." She ceased speaking, and sinking back on the sofa, buried her

face in her hands. Lillie could only stand and stare at her sister in amazement, and wonder what was the matter with her. After a few moments Deena seemed to partially recover herself, and in a voice strangely calm she said:

"Lillie, has Mark Day said anything to you of the future?"

"What do you mean?" asked Lillie.

"Has he—has he said he was coming back, or asked permission to write to you?"

"No, he has done neither. The tone of his conversation has always been just the same as when you were by."

For a few moments Deena sat gravely looking down upon the floor. Her brow was contracted, and beyond a doubt there was a great struggle going on within her breast. At last she raised her head and asked:

"Lillie, don't you like him?"

The girl blushed, and after a few moments she answered:

"Yes, just the least bit, but a girl should never give her love until it is asked. He has never spoken to me yet on the subject."

"Suppose he should?"

"I'm afraid—afraid—I cannot exactly tell."

"I think I can tell. You like Mark Day now; he is a fine looking young man with pleasing address and winning ways. You could easily learn to love him if he asked you, could you not?"

"Well," said Lillie deliberately, while a roguish twinkle appeared in her eyes, "I guess indications point that way."

Though she had spoken lightly of the matter, her crimson face and trembling form bore evidence to the truthfulness of her statement. Lillie made a struggle to conceal her emotions from her sister, but it was all in vain. Deena gazed at her blushing sister a moment, and said;

"Lillie—Lillie, it must not be."

Slowly and solemnly as if about to engage in some serious undertaking, Deena rose and left the room. She was gone but a few moments when she returned, carrying a heavy wooden casket which contained all the relics of the family. This casket had been the greatest curiosity to Lillie, simply because she knew not what it contained. Every chest, box and drawer she had ransacked through, time and again, but that small casket had ever been a sealed mystery to her. When quite small she had in vain appealed to Deena to open it, and had at last come to regard it as a Pandora's box which was never to be opened.

When Deena took her place by her side with the mysterious casket on her knee, Lillie hoped that her long pent up curiosity would be satisfied. She said nothing, for she was already aware how useless it was for her to appeal to her sister.

With wide open eyes she watched her sister unlock the casket, and raise the lid. Only some bundles of old letters were visible, but when Deena removed these, there remained a large official envelope at the bottom. It was unsealed, and Deena taking it out, drew from it a legal looking document which she placed in Lillie's hand, saying:

"Read that, and you will understand all."

When Lillie had examined the document, she threw her arms about poor Deena's neck and sobbed:

"Poor, poor, sister, how could you keep this secret all to yourself for so many years? Why did you not tell me before?"

"For our brother's sake I was bound to keep it, and had not Mark Day come here, this secret would never have been revealed even to you."

"But when George died, why did you not tell me?"

"It would have done no good, given me pain, and brought reproach on the memory of George. But I will tell you all about it now, nothing shall be kept from you."

With bowed head and trembling form, Lillie listened to the story of her sister's wrongs. Midnight came and found them sitting very quietly, the one telling, the other listening. Deena's face was like marble as she continued to unveil the past.

* * * * * * *

"I guess I will be honorable in this affair," said Mark Day to himself, as he sat alone in his room in the hotel. "Lillie is an orphan and depends on her older sister to take the place of both mother and father, and much as I dread the freezing looks of Deena Hammond, I will get her permission before I mention a correspondence to Lillie. Ugh! I dread Deena Hammond as much as I used to dread Bill Barnes. But if I succeed as well with her as I did with Bill, I shall be happy." Mark had formed a habit of thinking aloud, especially on matters which he wished to discuss with himself.

Next morning he went to the little home of Deena and Lillie Hammond. The former met him with a deeper gravity than he had ever noticed before. She invited him into the little parlor, where he sat for several moments trying to muster up courage to mention the object of his visit. He had felt from the very first that for some unaccountable reason Deena Hammond had an increasing dislike for him. But he was desperate now and determined to fight his way through boldly. When he had asked the privilege of corresponding with her sister, Deena fixed her eyes on him for a moment, and asked:

"Will you not do so any way whether I consent or not?"

Mark was confused by this direct question. He had to think twice before he answered, but mastering himself he answered:

He started off with a yelp of delight, his laughing eyes expressing his pleasure. The ball was found and Lillie was throwing and Carlo catching it, when Ida Frost came.

"I thought you would be lonesome, so I came to stay awhile with you," she said, "but you seem to be enjoying yourself. I wish you didn't have to go away."

"I think I will get a position nearer home next time," said Lillie, laughing.

"I'm afraid not," Ida responded with much gravity. "I'm afraid you will accept a position that may take you out of the State. It is as natural for you to be a Day, Lillie, as it is for Frost to turn to Snow."

Lillie laughed and asked her to come into the house. The subject was quickly changed and one would think that Mark was entirely out of the girl's mind.

CHAPTER XXXII.

AROUSED BY LIVING MEMORIES.

"Thy gifts, thy tables are within my brain,
Full charactered with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rank remain,
Beyond all date, even to eternity."
—*Shakespeare.*

IN a well-furnished room in San Francisco a young man was sitting alone. It was an early hour, and the occupant of the room was evidently an early riser. His features bore marks of mental industry, and severe battles with the world had left their traces on his noble brow. Firmness was expressed in every lineament of that smoothly-shaven face. He had evidently met with temptation, and though unhorsed at the first tilt, he had rallied and conquered his foe. Daily papers were scattered in profusion about the room. On the centre table lay a gold-clasped bible. He took up a late paper, scanned first the financial column, then the current news and finally the political column. He threw the paper down and looked at his watch.

"Fifteen minutes yet till breakfast," he said

to himself. "Now, I can look over some of those papers which I had not time to glance at when I was so pressed with business."

He took up several which had been carefully folded and laid away. Seating himself near the window he unfolded one and began to read.

"Hello, what's this?" he suddenly cried, fixing his eyes on a glaring head line, "*Suicide in Staunton.*" His eyes ran down the long column of horror, devouring it all in a few moments. Then starting up with hand to his forehead, he said in broken sentences:

"Dr. Guy Denesmore—a hard drinker for several years—tried to reform—lived a sober life for a year—six months ago he took up his old habits again and drank harder than ever before—"

He stopped and began walking back and forth across the room. Several times he paused and picked up the paper as if in doubt as to whether he had made a mistake or not. Three or four times he read it all over, and throwing the paper down, began again in broken sentences:

"The family destitute—that must be newspaper gossip. Why the Denesmores were rich. No, he drank hard for several years, and it may all be so yet. But where is William Strasmore? He saved others, could he not save his wife's brother? Poor Pauline, will not this break her heart? He has a family, and they are in desti-

tute circumstances. Perhaps I can now repay some of the debts of gratitude I owe the family. To William Strasmore and Pauline I owe everything that I am. I will go back to that place where I knew so much humiliation and misery; I will visit the graves of my parents and sisters. That I will meet Ernest Day is my only reason for regretting to return to my old home. I feel that if I have an evil genius on earth, it is he. "Ah, Guy Denesmore," he finally mused, "when I think how life began with us and how it has ended with you, I am more astounded at your fall than my own. I will start for my old home just as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made." With these thoughts he quitted the room.

Perhaps the reader would like to know where George Hammond has been all these years while his friends have mourned him as dead. We left him faintly knocking at the door of faith and asking for help. Did ever mortal knock in vain? In Omaha, George found that temptations beset him. Once he entered a saloon, raised the glass to his lips; he paused, set it down, looked at the faces of those present, thinking to himself:

"I left old associates that I might be able to break off this habit, and free myself from this bondage. Strasmore advised me to cast my lot among different people." He could bear these reflections no longer, but pushing back the glass,

he hurried from the saloon never to enter another. Did he have any more desire to drink? Only those who are cursed with burning, craving appetites know what it is to resist the tempting glass. That consuming thirst which water cannot satisfy, that morbid appetite for strong drink, is the most terrible agony that suffering humanity is ever called on to endure. George still knocked, though timidly, at the door of faith. He wrote to his family that he would go to Denver, Colorado, the next day after writing that letter, and they were to write him there. By the same mail he sent a letter to Strasmore in which he confessed his temptation and his resistance.

In Denver he obtained a position as clerk in a retail store. His industry and honesty soon won the confidence of his employers. He had been here but a few weeks when he was prostrated with a lingering fever. The physicians did not consider him dangerously ill, but thought the fever must run its course. When he was able to read there were several letters awaiting him. The contents of these proved a terrible blow to George. A serious relapse set in, and for weeks very little hopes were entertained for his recovery. For days his life seemed suspended by a thread; a slight change for the better at last came. Very slowly he was brought back to life, and to the full realization that all his friends were gone.

"I am alone in the world! Why could I not have gone with them?" As the days grew into weeks, he gained friends, and found, at last his lot cast among the right kind of people. The promises of his Savior brought peace to this wandering, erring man. Disappointed with earth, he contemplated with joy a life hereafter. This brought forcibly to his mind the knowledge that he had abused his privileges; but he felt the consciousness within that his sins were forgiven. Slowly he recovered strength, and with it a new hold on life. He had been very economical since leaving Staunton, and had accumulated considerable money, which was to defray the expense of his father and family to the West. All this was spent during his illness, and when he was once more able to leave his bed, he not only found himself penniless, but with a heavy debt hanging over his head. There was no one now at home to whom to write, so he lived a year or two in Denver, and a better opening at San Francisco being offered to him, he accepted it, and became cashier in a bank. He had not only found excellent remunerative employment, but that peace which passeth understanding. George Hammond was numbered among the redeemed, and lived in blessed anticipation of a better life in the world to come. While preparing to return to the home of his childhood, he thought:

"Guy — noble, generous Guy — so generous

that he would not raise his voice in opposition to a man selling intoxicating drinks, had sanctioned the evil by his silence, to his own destruction, soul and body. But William, so powerful to save from woe, where was he, and why did he not snatch Guy from perdition?"

* * * * * * *

The very night that Lillie Hammond spent sleeplessly tossing on the bed, partly on her sister's account, and partly on her own, Mark Day was on his way home, his mind busy with painful and perplexing thoughts. When Mark reached Staunton, he was met at the depot by a physician, who informed him that his brother was dangerously ill. He went immediately to Ernest Day's residence, the old homestead, and there remained at his brother's side day and night for a fortnight. One evening a friend of Mark called to enquire after Ernest's condition, and told Mark that George Hammond, whom they had all supposed dead, had suddenly turned up. Mark expressed a strong desire to see him, and his friend promised to remain in his place for a few hours and see that the nurse did his duty, and assist him as best he could.

"Very well," said Mark, "I will call on Maria and Miss Denesmore, and if Hammond is in town, he will be very liable to call there."

When he reached the cottage, Maria had gone to bed, and Pauline and the little girl were

In the sitting room. Little Pauline ran to her uncle Mark's arms, and he held her on his knee, while he told Pauline of his journey west and Ernest's illness. The child in his arms had gone to sleep, and he had laid it on the sofa, when the door-bell rang. Mark answered it, and admitted a tall gentleman.

"I believe Dr. Denesmore's family lives here," said the stranger, interrogatively.

"Yes sir, will you walk in?"

"Thank you." Stepping inside, he added, "My name is Hammond."

"Can it be possible that this is George Hammond," cried Pauline, who had followed Mark into the hallway.

"It is, and if I am not mistaken I have met you before."

"You have. I am Pauline Denesmore," she answered, extending her hand and welcoming the wanderer back.

"Pauline Denesmore," he said almost incredulously, as he fixed his eyes on her.

"Yes sir, I am Pauline Denesmore," she answered with a deep drawn sigh. "Time has wrought changes in us all. You have changed for the better, I for the worse.

"Not for the worse, Miss Denesmore," said George Hammond after a moment's silent struggle. "Your circumstances have materially changed, and though you have suffered greatly,

your trials have made you purer and better."

Pauline now informed George Hammond that this young man who stood by them was Mark Day, the mischievous boy they once had known. George could hardly believe it, though he thought he could discern the old mischievous twinkle still in his eyes. It was not until they had been seated for some minutes in the neat little sitting-room, that Pauline in tones very low and sad, asked if he had heard about Guy.

"I read an account of it in the papers about two weeks ago."

A look of displeasure came into George Hammond's face when he was introduced to Mark Day. Mark noticed it himself, but realizing that he was Lillie's brother, he strove to melt that icy reserve. When Mark at last said that he had had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Hammond's sisters but a few days before, George bounded to his feet as if he had seen a ghost, and cried:

"What! my sisters! what do you mean?"

"I mean that I visited your sisters Modenia and Lillie only a few days ago."

"You must be crazy," cried the amazed George Hammond. "My sisters are dead. They have been dead for years."

"You are deceived, Mr. Hammond. Your parents are dead, but your sisters are alive and well," said Mark earnestly. "I rather suspect

that you have been misinformed or imposed on concerning your family."

After a few moments, during which time George Hammond sat trying to collect his wits, he said:

"I received letters bearing Guy Densmore's and William Strasmore's signatures, saying that my parents and sisters were dead. It was not in their nature to deceive. Poor Deena, poor little Lillie—I only hope I may be able to sift this thing to the bottom. Where is Ernest Day?" He fixed his eyes almost fiercely on Mark as he spoke.

"At home very sick. I hope, Mr. Hammond, you may not only be able to find out who wronged you, but also his motive. If I can be of any service I am at your command," said Mark.

Both his hearers looked at him in wonder and admiration, and a few moments later he left the house to return to that sinful brother who was perhaps nearing the end. Mark believed he had found a clew and intended to follow it up until he was satisfied.

"That is Guy's little girl," said Pauline, pointing to the sleeping child. George bent over the innocent sleeper, pressed a kiss on its cheek and murmured:

"Guy's child!—I think I should have known it had you not said so. She has her father's features."

It was late when George left the cottage. He had given Pauline a brief sketch of his eventful life since he left Staunton. She in turn had related her own sad history and they were mutual sharers in each other's grief. Pauline looked forward with as much joy to the family reunion as did George himself. George was at first inclined to set out at once for the village in Kansas where his sisters lived; but Pauline prevailed on him to let her write a letter to them gradually breaking the good news to Deena, and she and George were to follow the letter in a few days.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE DEATH BED CONFESSION.

"But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires must down as low
As high he soared * * * Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils."

—*Milton.*

MARK'S brain was very active. A word or a look was sure to give him a truthful presentiment. When George asked:

"Where is Ernest Day?" Like a flash Mark recalled Deena's dislike for himself, the deception practiced on herself and brother, and the conviction settled on his mind that they both suspected the cunning, crafty Ernest Day as the author of much of their misery. He knew that Ernest only served himself, and that for some reason he must have wanted the Hammonds out of the way. He determined to know what that reason was.

When he returned to the bedside of Ernest he found him nervous and restless. There had never been much fraternal affection between these brothers. Their paths had been so dissimilar, and there had been so little in common between

them that they had been little better than strangers. Mark's morality (it could scarce be called religion) made him an object of ridicule in his brother's eyes. But when Ernest was sick and suffering, and needed the watchful care of a brother, Mark forgot all except his duty as a brother. Ernest soon came to expect none but Mark to administer to his wants. When in his fretful, peevish state he found fault with Mark, Mark joined him and found fault with himself. Ernest found he could accomplish nothing by grumbling, so he tried the plan of exacting more than any person could accomplish. But Mark was so good natured and received his scolding with such good grace, that Ernest at last ceased to complain and was passive in the hands of his brother and the doctor. This was the first time Mark had left his post of duty since he volunteered to act as nurse. Ernest was tossing and groaning when Mark returned, and the moment he entered, the sick man bade his brother's substitute go away. Mark followed the man into the hall and requested him to remain in the building and within call. The man consented, for he knew the end of Ernest Day's existence was approaching.

Mark set to work as soon as he entered his sick brother's room, to make his few remaining moments as comfortable as it was possible. He lifted the emaciated form to a

chair, and turned the mattress and smoothed the bed and pillows. Ernest's feet and hands were growing cold and Mark began rubbing them to restore the circulation. When they had again assumed a partial warmth, he said :

"George Hammond is back ; I have seen him this evening." Mark did not expect the shock that his words produced on his brother. He started strangely, and stared so wildly at poor Mark that he could only stammer : "You knew him, didn't you ?"

"Why don't you ask if I knew Will Strasmore ?"

"Because I know you knew him, but I guess you know more about both George and William than you would like to confess." Mark knew not what prompted him to make such an assertion, it seemed to come involuntarily. Ernest, with a look still more wild and fierce, half started from the bed and fixing his strangely staring eyes on his brother, almost shrieked :

"What do you mean ?"

"You can tell, for you know." Ernest sank back with a groan and closed his eyes. After a moment he opened them and fixed them on the anxious Mark. For a moment he stared at his brother and then his lips parted and he murmured :

"George Hammond back ! What will the end be ? He and Pauline have failed. They will pity

each other. Of course he is as poor as a church mouse—so is she; but they can exchange rich sentiments. Bosh! Will Strasmore placed him on his feet when he was in the gutter—the letter informed me that much. I guess he has come back to take Will's place—that will be the end of it I very plainly see."

Extending his hands toward Mark, he said: "It is coming on, they are growing cold again, Mark." Mark rubbed them vigorously for a few moments, but without producing any effect.

"It is no use," said Ernest, despairingly. "My time is up. Don't you think so, Mark?"

"I fear it is, Ernest; do you want me to call any one?"

"No—no, I want you alone with me. You are a good boy, Mark, though I've never appreciated you as I ought until this last sickness. I can never repay you for what you have already done for me, but don't leave me now, for it's coming. I don't want any one but you by when it does come; it will soon be over. Oh, Mark, this leap in the dark is an awful thing! I have heard of people dying happy. If I could live a little longer, I might make amends. My life has been a failure; and it ends by a leap in the dark."

Mark longed to comfort the dying infidel; but being only a moralist himself, he lacked that Christian faith which can make a dying bed as soft as downy pillows. If Pauline were

there, she could say the right thing, but there was no one to speak a word of comfort or offer a prayer for that dark soul, so soon to leave its frail tenement of clay. After a few moments Ernest Day gathering up his strength, began:

"I shall not take this leap in the dark as a coward. I have not been merciful, but you shall learn it all. I have been a good financier and my successful speculations have made me rich. It will lawfully descend to my wife, brother and sister—"

"Your wife!" interrupted Mark, thinking Ernest's mind must be wandering.

"Yes, my wife, who is none other than the lady you have known as Deena Hammond."

"Deena Hammond your wife!"

"Yes—don't interrupt me again, Mark, for I have much to say and my time is short. Oh, I do so want to get this load lifted from my conscience before I go. If I do not, I feel that it will sink me deeper into hell. Deena and I grew up together. I loved her. I know now she was the only woman I ever loved. Good and pure as she was I could not accept her with her poverty. Still I could not give her up. I was conscious of her goodness as well as her beauty. When I learned that other suitors were seeking to win her love, I became jealous. I was desperate and while I did not want to make her my wife, I wanted to prevent her marrying any one

else. I was intimate with George Hammond and told him I loved Deena. George said we were both too young to think of love, and that my affection would only prove a boyish fancy. When I swore that I would win his sister, he said he would prevent it if he could, unless I changed my course. I was too fast and must give up my associations, habits, and quit drinking if ever I expected to marry his sister. It fired me and I swore I would make George Hammond pay for his words."

Mark Day dropped the cold hand he had been chafing, and fixing his eyes on his brother, mentally ejaculated: "God forbid that you should ever have a counterpart."

"I was only a moderate drinker, Mark," Ernest went on. "I loved liberty and when I found that my drams were to be stopped it roused me. I loved wine, whisky and beer, for they have been my chief comfort, but I always knew when to stop until of late years, then I occasionally took too much. I must give up drinking to win his sister. It was an insult thrown in my face. It was trampling under foot one of my fixed principles — liberty — and I laid revenge up in my heart. I secretly wooed and won Deena Hammond and man never won a truer or better woman. I found it much easier to win her affection than her consent to a secret marriage. When I first mentioned the

subject she protested strongly, but I used the old plea that my father would oppose the match and might disinherit me, unless I married some one whom he thought better fitted for my station in society. Our wedding could be a quiet affair and my father's objections would gradually pass away. I would not let her go, I could not give her up, and the more she tried to put me off the more determined I was to have my way, and at last she consented. She went to visit friends in another State and I met her there. On her eighteenth birthday we were married at the house of a country clergyman. Three States lay between the place of our marriage and my home, and if I could but keep my tracks covered up the matter might remain a secret. Only a few confidential friends were in the secret, and they regarded it simply as a bit of harmless romance. We returned home separately and completely deceived every one. Deena soon grew tired of deception and begged that the truth be told, but I positively forbade her to hint it, and tears and reproaches followed. Deena grew pale and sad. Old Joe Hammond grew worse, George became discouraged and the Hammond home lost its attractions. I tried to buy Deena off and wanted her to either get a divorce or let me have one. It could have been done in the same State where we were married and the world never known of our silly union. She objected and

urged that if I did not want to marry again, why did I want a divorce. She asked no support of me, and our marriage could remain a secret unless I began paying attention to some other lady. Should I do that my secret should be published to the world by her putting our marriage certificate on record. The poor girl had a hard struggle to keep it all from her mother, but she made her father's drunkenness an excuse, and by that deceived the mother. About that time Pauline returned from school. You remember what she was then, Mark, a lovely girl, as pretty as Deena had ever been. Although they were about the same age, Deena's troubles made her look many years older. I knew that Pauline was a woman any man might be proud to call wife, and there was no objection to her family. I coveted the prize, but already having an encumbrance, I was not free to win her. I was several times at Denesmore's house, but usually with Maria, for I knew that if provoked, Deena would put her threat in execution. Guy returned from college, bringing Strasmore with him. An attachment sprang up between Pauline and Strasmore which almost drove me mad with jealousy. I hated Strasmore from the first; his cool politeness and piercing glances enraged me. I determined to supplant him by fair means or foul and set to work in earnest to accomplish my object. The first thing to be done was to silence

Deena. I have always been called cunning, but then I played my finest card. Every evening I spent with George Hammond making him think I was his best friend. I knew his besetting sin was an inherited appetite for strong drink and worked that game on him. He believed and trusted me, and by degrees I led him to the saloon and gambling den. He was not of the stuff of which moderate drinkers are made. With him it was total abstinence or degrading drunkenness.

"My plan worked like a charm. Deena bowed under this new affliction and shut herself up from the world. She failed rapidly and Pauline's woe-stricken face has never been anything to compare with Deena's."

"Had you no honor—no pity?" asked the impulsive Mark.

"Don't mention pity. I would not let myself think of pity. I had an end to accomplish and I intended to do it regardless of every consideration. George soon became a sot. You remember what an excellent tool old Fitzgooden was? Well, I made good use of him. Deena had never seen him. I made her believe that George had forged a note against me and hired Fitzgooden to corroborate my statement, and she believed us. Deena promised secrecy to save George and I guess she has kept her promise to this day, though she kept the marriage cer-

tificate. But I was not safe. George braced up and showed some signs of reformation and started out West. I knew what his intentions were and I knew that as sure as he became a sober man, he would have his family with him. Were they together the fact of his innocence would leak out, and brother and sister would publish me to the world. But I foiled them there again. You know John Porter was in the post-office at that time. He and I were fast friends. John was a scoundrel of the deepest dye, and I made arrangements with him to save George Hammond's letters and let me have them. He did so, and I soon had a letter for William Strasmore and Pauline. I kept up a correspondence in the name of his various friends and relations for some time."

The dying man was growing momentarily weaker and his last sentences were scarce above a whisper. He closed his eyes wearily; and Mark knowing his story was not yet told, put some water to his lips and chafed his hands. After a few moments Ernest spoke again.

"Do you think my time is up, Mark?"

"I know it is, Ernest. I do not think you can possibly live until to-morrow's sun sets. If you have more to tell you had better tell it now while you can." A shudder passed over the dying man.

"This is awful, Mark," he groaned. "If I had

even been a moral man, this leap in the dark would not be so terrible."

"If you had been strictly moral, not only yourself but others would have been saved worlds of agony. But finish your story."

"While George was sick in Denver, I had a letter written in Strasmore's hand informing him of the death of his parents and sisters, and sent it. He was sick at the time and believed it. I can tell no more—I am going."

"William Strasmore—quick—tell me of him."

"I hated him—he was my successful rival; besides he was making a war against the liquor traffic. It was the rashest act of my life, but my brain was fired with hatred and whisky. I was on the common that night—behind a tree, and I fired that pistol. He fell—that's all—*I murdered him*!" The last sentence was hissed through clenched teeth and the eyes glared like the orbs of a demon.

"What about Guy?" asked Mark.

"You don't think I killed him, do you?"

"Tell all, Ernest, for time is almost up."

"I was glad when Guy took his first glass. I helped along every way I could. When I took the mortgage on the Denesmore place I did it to humiliate Pauline for twice rejecting me, and *I did it.* She was forced to bear it all in silence, too." After a moment's wrestling with the ominous rattle in his throat, Ernest,

said: "I didn't kill Guy outright as I did Strasmore, but I might as well."

"You had better have done so," Mark answered. "Oh, Ernest, brother, I would willingly lay down my life to make you a guiltless man."

All became still. Only that increasing death rattle in Ernest Day's throat broke the silence. The dissipation of this moderate drinker had at last broken down even his iron constitution. Mark was reviewing in his mind the awful death-bed confession. Drink was at the bottom of it all. Men love drink better than wife, children, honor, life or soul. Men deliberately commit perjury for drink. Was Ernest Day alone to blame. His father had set the example of shrewdness and of moderate drinking before him. If Ernest had carried his shrewdness beyond honesty, and his moderate drinking to debauchery, is it to be wondered at when the example was set so fairly before him? Fathers and mothers, how can you rest in your graves, knowing that you are not guiltless of the mis-spent lives of your children.

Mark, with folded arms, stood by the side of his dying brother. The cheeks were wan and hollow, the eyes sunken, and yet every feature indicated long continued dissipation. The rattle in his throat increased and his breath grew shorter every moment. Mark went to the door and told his friend in the hall to bring the doctor.

The physician came and said it would soon be over. Ernest moved slightly and in a feeble voice said:

"Mark! Mark! oh I am so cold—and it is growing dark. I am taking the awful leap. I am about to fall—oh do hold me back!" He clutched his brother's arm almost frantically, while the death rattle increased.

"We have done all we can for you, brother. The time for your change has come," said Mark, while tears stole down his cheeks.

"Yes, I know it—I know it, Mark. I can not see you—hold my hand—oh! hold me back!

"I am here Ernest—right at your side, and will hold your hand until it is all over."

A struggle and a groan that pierced Mark and the doctor with its horror, and the dying man straightened himself and breathed only at intervals.

A messenger was sent for Maria, but before she came the eyes had closed forever. The leap had been made—in the dark.

Thus this man of almost unequalled cunning, who had thwarted the plans of many, was not able to thwart Death when he called. With money he had carried many points, but money could not save him now. While we linger for a moment by his bier and look on the cold features, let us ask if it paid him to succeed at the cost of principle. The fear of death may not be the

highest motive, but he who fears real danger is wise. To avoid a terrible death, one should avoid an evil life. Revenge may be sweet at first, but is bitter at the last. "'Tis better to be wronged than wrong." Better be a William Strasmore, starting influences for good to be lived in other lives, though you die a martyr, than to be an Earnest Day in possession of both the Day and Denesmore estates, with guilt enough to sink you to the lowest hell.

* * * * * * * * *

Early next day Mark called on George Hammond at his hotel, and that part of Ernest's confession which concerned George or Deena was told him, but it was not until some months later that he knew the whole story. Next mail carried Pauline's letter to Deena, giving her the news of the restoration of her long lost brother; also one from that brother informing her of the death of Ernest Day. The same mail bore a letter from Mark to Arthur Templeton which proved an astounding revelation to that gentleman.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE REUNION.

"My sister! my sweet sister! if a name
Dearer and fairer were, it should be thine;
Mountains have divided us, but I claim
No tears, but tenderness to answer mine;
Go where I will, to me thou art the same."

—*Byron.*

WHEN George Hammond first met Pauline Denesmore and noticed how changed she was, his heart ached. He longed to call her away and shield her if possible from the terrible memories of the past. She had reigned in his heart for years. Her kindness to himself and sister during their unhappy childhood and even in later years lingered among his brightest recollections. Though their social positions were so widely different that he could only admire her from a distance, there were times when the pretty face of Pauline Denesmore was mingled with George Hammond's dreams. Pauline little understood the position she held in George Hammond's affections. She had never loved but once, and that love was still as

sacred as when first plighted. The memory of William seemed sweeter in contrast to the days of bitter anguish through which she had passed since his death. Even the noble, manly George Hammond roused sweet reflections of the departed, for it was William who had saved him from degradation and death. There was a sort of sad pleasure in being with George, and before he had been in Staunton a week she found herself anxiously waiting and expecting his visits.

She never realized until the time came for him to go, how lonely she would be when he was gone. When in George's presence there was a quiet content within her heart which surpassed any feeling she had experienced since William's death. It had been Pauline's intention to accompany George Hammond to Kansas, but finally she determined not to do so. The day before George's departure, Mark asked Pauline to visit her old home once more. As Deena had an interest in the place her brother was also invited to accompany them. At first Pauline felt that the task would be too much for her, but when George urged her so earnestly to accompany him she consented. It was the first time she had crossed the threshold of that dear old home since she had quitted it. His manly arm supported her up and down the old stairs. They passed through the halls and principal rooms, and now stood at the parlor window looking out upon the beauti-

ful grounds, where Pauline had spent so many happy hours. Mark had excused himself to see after some workmen for a moment. As they were thus alone, the sad recollections came vividly before Pauline, yet the words and presence of George were so like balm to the bowed spirit that she felt a comfort and rest that she could not explain. As they stood thus, the words in George's heart came to his lips.

"Miss Denesmore—Pauline, I cannot leave without making a confession to you. Had I not found you battling with the storms of life, I never would have dared tell you, for I feel your superiority. Knowing what you have endured I can only wish that I could have shielded you from all these troubles; but I can give you the homage of a pure love. It may be bold in me to entertain such a hope. But can you not give me a place in your affection? We are past the time for romance—will you be my wife?"

Pauline raised her astonished eyes to the earnest, handsome face. This declaration was certainly a great surprise to her. She looked about to see if Mark was in the room, but he was absent. Her feelings at that moment were indescribable. Before her was a man whose principles were as firmly fixed as were William Strasmore's, and he claimed to love her. What should she do? Must she go through life in this lonely way or could she be happier as

George Hammond's wife? She was not indifferent to the fact that in the stormy trials to which she was exposed, she needed a strong arm on which to lean, a loving heart in which to confide. Her life's sad experience had taught her the comfort of these. She was not in a hurry to reply, and for a long time reflected on the startling question. At last she said:

"George Hammond, you know full well that my affections lie buried in the grave. I loved William Strasmore as I can never love another; you are worthy to be any woman's husband. I can love you and shall in time come to do so. I can make you an affectionate wife."

He drew her to his breast, which was henceforth to be her place of refuge.

"Poor, patient, storm-tossed soul," George murmured, "this even—is more joy than I ever dared to hope."

"Though the bitter past is too deeply impressed on our hearts to be effaced," said Pauline, "we will try and live in the joy and hope of the future."

Plans for the future were laid that very day. Six months later George was to return and claim his bride. On the morrow he bade adieu to the one whom he had so long loved in secret and set out to join those sisters whom he had not seen for years.

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Early one bright morning Lillie Hammond rose from the breakfast table and asked her elder sister:

"Deena, what do you want me to do to-day?"

"Go to the post-office is about all, I guess," Deena replied. "It is time I should have a letter from Pauline."

A moment later the merry, fun-loving Lillie had donned hat and gloves and left the little cottage. Girls do not usually belong to that class or family of beings called solitary. You seldom ever know a girl to go down town, or out shopping alone if she has a girl friend of her own age near who is able to go with her. We usually see girls going in pairs or little groups, and they are certainly happier, brighter and prettier by being together. It was just as natural for Lillie to call on her friend, Ida, to go with her to the post-office, even though it would have been nearer to have gone direct, as it was for Ida to set aside all manner of excuse and delay and get ready to go with her.

"I guess there will not be a large mail for us," said Lillie, as they tripped along the sidewalk to the post-office. "Deena has but one correspondent and I have none."

"I don't think you can say that much longer," returned Ida, with a laugh. "I wouldn't be surprised if there were a letter there for you this morning."

"From whom?"

"Mr. Day."

"No, there wont. I know he won't write to me."

"How you do talk! What makes you think he will not?"

"He never asked me if he could."

They had now reached the post-office and the postmaster handed out two letters for Deena. Lillie experienced a peculiar sensation as she glanced at the superscription on one envelope. Surely that handwriting was familiar, yet whose could it be? She trembled and almost wished that Ida were not with her.

"Deena has but one correspondent, you said," remarked Ida, as they left the post-office. "One of these letters is from her, and the other is from Mark Day. He has written to Deena and asked her if he might correspond with you." Lillie assured her it was not from Mark, and she felt not a little relieved when Ida stopped at her own gate, saying: "If you are not here by two o'clock in the afternoon I will come after you."

Lillie promised that she would be promptly on hand and then hurried home. She called Deena, who was in the kitchen, and handing her the letters, said:

"One of those letters is in a strange hand. I seem to have seen it before, but I cannot say whose it is."

Deena took the letter, broke the seal and squeezing the edges of the envelope together inserted the thumb and finger of her right hand into it and drew forth the folded letter, which she spread out before her. She glanced at it a moment, devouring its contents, while a strange joyous light illumined her face. Then she held out the letter to Lillie, saying:

"Oh! Lillie—Lillie, brother George is alive!"

With trembling hand and tear-dimmed eyes, Lillie took the letter and read it through. Ernest's death-bed confessions and sufferings strangely affected Deena. Although he had been the evil genius of the Hammond family she freely forgave him. The letter was re-read and commented on by the sisters. The other letter was from Pauline and corroborated what George had written.

Arthur Templeton received a letter from Mark which he read to his mother and they held a long consultation together. The letter had told all, and Mrs. Templeton knew that Deena would shrink from making the revelation herself, but would feel relieved to know it had been made. Next day Mrs. Templeton, with her benevolent face wreathed with smiles, called on the sisters. Deena was alone and as soon as her visitor was seated, the kind old lady began:

"I have heard all about it. Arthur got a letter from Mark Day last night, which told all

about your brother coming back like one from the dead. Mark explained everything, dear, and relieved you of the task."

Deena, with a sigh of relief, answered:

"I have been thinking, Mrs. Templeton, how I should account to you for the deception—"

"Oh, no, no, never mind that," interrupted the kind old lady, in time to prevent Deena from breaking down. "Of course, deception is wrong, but there are many mitigating circumstances in your case. But you did the best you could, and no one can really blame you. You prevented his getting a divorce and wrecking the happiness of some other girl."

* * * * * * *

Another week has passed and again it is a brilliant morning. Lillie is hastening about the room in a state of excitement, while Deena sits by the window, her face aglow with expectation. The mail hack comes toward the house and stops at the gate. Deena arose, paused for a single moment trembling with agitation, and started toward the door, when George bounded into the room and caught his eldest sister in his arms:

"Deena!"

"George!" was all that was spoken until Lillie said:

"Brother, have you forgotten me?"

"Can this be our sister, Lillie?" he asked, holding her back and looking at her.

"I have good reason to believe it is," she answered.

"You look more like our mother than either of us, and are as mischievous as ever," said George, leading them both to the sofa.

The past, present and future were all discussed in a hurried manner, and then carefully gone over in detail.

"George, can you forgive me for my deception?" asked Deena, after they had gone over the sad story of her marriage with Ernest Day.

"You were first to forgive, and I would be worse than a sinner not to forgive you. Why did you not tell me that Ernest accused me of forgery?"

"I believed it, George. Strong drink so changes the disposition of men, that I knew not what you might have done when crazed and fired to madness with whiskey. It made of Ernest Day a demon. I would not believe him when he told me, until he brought another to confirm his story."

"What strong drink made of Ernest Day, and the end to which moderate dram-drinking brought him, should be a warning to all moderate drinkers. He completely deceived me. In the name of Dr. Denesmore he wrote me first of mother's and father's death, and afterwards of your deaths from typhoid fever. Then in the name of Strasmore, in a hand and style en-

tirely different, he wrote, offering me Christian consolation in bereavement. But it is all past. Light has dawned and your days of toil and sorrow are over. I have a pleasant home for both of you in San Francisco."

Lillie, with a mischievous look at her sister, said:

"I expect she won't go at all. Her engagements will keep her here for some time yet and then—well a word to the wise is sufficient."

George smiling, asked:

"Will you come, Lillie, and live in my new home on the western sea?"

"Oh, if you can get no one else to look after your dinner and darn your socks I will try it. But I suspect you will soon be looking up a Mrs. George Hammond to relieve me, and then my time will be divided between the two places."

"If that is your wish it can be gratified," said George Hammond.

"Who is it, brother—we will love her for your sake," said Deena.

"You already love her for her own sake, her name is Pauline Denesmore."

"Oh, George, is it true?" cried Deena, clapping her hands for joy. "I do love Pauline and always have. She has been more than a sister to me."

"I know I shall like her, but I don't remem-

ber much about her. I may stay with you more than with Deena if Mr. Templeton should grow to be cross in his old days," said Lillie.

"You may have a home of your own," said George, with a smile. "I am satisfied you will see Mark Day before many days have passed. He is a good fellow, and I took a brother's privilege to give him permission to write to you. I think if you will call at the post-office you will find a letter awaiting you from Mark, and he may say something nice in it."

George was correct. That evening Mrs. Templeton and her son called, and George and Arthur soon became fast friends. Lillie was sitting between her sister and Mrs. Templeton and recurring to her cherished ambition, said mischievously:

"I believe I am too comfortable to write a book. I'll leave that to such tempest-tossed souls as authors must be, or they could not enter into the woes and sorrows of their characters." Mrs. Templeton smiled and nodded her head in silence, while Deena gravely responded:

"A very wise conclusion, Lillie."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE WEDDING.

"He led her blushing like the morn; all Heaven
And happy constellations on that hour
Shed their selected influence!

—*Milton.*

THE next few months was a busy period for Mark Day. It was desirable that Ernest's estate be settled as speedily and with as little expense as possible. Mark was the administrator, which was a new care on him, in addition to attending to his own affairs. The wise men of Staunton noted his movements, and said one to another, that he bid fair to exceed even his shrewd father as a business man, and had in addition, honesty and integrity, with no bad habits. He was soon classed among the best men of the city. He had gained what he had struggled for from boyhood—a name for truth, honesty and ability, and stood on the threshold of prosperity. He was young and vigorous, with an abundance of ambition, and a prosperous life seemed in store for him.

Mark purchased the Denesmore place which he offered to his brother's widow, but Deena wanted

no property in Staunton. Maria did not care to have so much money invested in real estate, but Mark said that the old place should not go out of the family, and kept it himself. Once more the hall echoed with busy workmen refitting and furnishing the house. Mark was in haste to have all this completed before Pauline's marriage, as he wanted that event celebrated in her old home.

George in the far west meanwhile, was preparing for the same event, trying to make a home as attractive as the one Pauline had been accustomed to from childhood. Deena and Lillie were looking forward to the coming event with no little degree of pleasure, while Arthur and his mother shared the happiness. Lillie sat in the background when Mr. Templeton was present, and was entertained rather than the entertainer. She noticed a marked change in both, and declared that Deena was becoming a girl again, and that no one could call Arthur awkward.

Pauline, Mark and Maria were at last established in the Denesmore house. Faithful Mandy and Henry held their old positions. Henry's assistant was Jefferson Lea Scott. Aunt Dinah had retired from active service except on special occasions. The coming event was to be an extra occasion, so her services would be required. George Hammond came from the West to claim

his bride. Deena and Lillie accompanied him.

The wedding morn came bright, rosy and blushing as the bride herself. All nature seemed decked in her gayest apparel as if to celebrate the occasion. Pauline did not attire herself in white satin and orange blossoms, as she had once expected to appear. The day for having only joy in her heart was past, but the sad, thoughtful looking bride was as dear to George Hammond as if she had been as fresh with youth as a maid of sixteen. The church was crowded to overflowing. The clergyman who had known both Pauline and George from childhood officiated. The warmest and most heartfelt congratulations were showered on the newly married couple. As the wilted flower lifts its head on receiving the nourishment of the gentle dew, so the human heart bowed down with toil, care and disappointment, is lifted up by words of encouragement. After so many years of sorrow to find old friends once more congratulating her, seemed to Pauline too much bliss for this life. Would it last, would peace remain unbroken, or was it only a lull before the storm? The unhappy reflections were scattered to the winds by the recollection that: "He giveth his beloved rest."

A wedding feast was prepared at the old Denesmore house, and after the guests dispersed the family had a few hours to themselves. Dur-

ing the conversation that followed, Arthur Templeton said his mother knew beyond a doubt that Mrs. Annie Strasmore was her husband's niece. Mr. Templeton, sr., had a brother who had but one daughter. The record of her birth was still in grandfather Templeton's register, which was in her possession. Mrs. Templeton took it on herself to explain:

"Arthur's father moved west when only a boy. There was only about eight years difference between his and Annie's ages. Mr. Templeton neglected to keep his brother informed of his whereabouts, and they finally lost track of each other entirely. I have written to Mr. Strasmore and he is satisfied that his wife Annie Templeton was none other than John Templeton's child."

"Truth is stranger than fiction," said Mark with strange solemnity. "When we review the lives of the Strasmores, Denesmores and Hammonds, we must acknowledge that to be true. We have all been tried in the fire. But remember that all is well that ends well. We are all safe from that enemy which once put out the light in this home, for we know how subtle and dangerous a foe it is."

When Mark permitted Maria to live in his house, it was with the distinct understanding that she should give up her wines and strengthening cordials, or patent medicines, which were only

alcohol in disguise. Maria gave consent, and took up her abode with her brother, who was very kind to the unfortunate woman. She had lost much of her pride and *hauteur*, and her very selfishness and love of ease made her humble and submissive. Mark loved little Pauline and the child returned his affection. She was very different from her mother, having less selfishness and more strong common sense.

The hardest task Pauline had in leaving her old home was separating from her little namesake. When the child clung to her neck and begged her as only a child can not to go, Pauline's tears mingled with hers. The promise of toys and presents would not buy her off, and it was only by a strategem that Mark finally succeeded in pacifying her.

Mark accompanied Pauline and George to the depot and bade them adieu as they boarded the train. Pauline had so long been a sister to him that it was hard to give her up. The old place would be lonely without her, but he had little Pauline, whose sweet prattle would in a measure comfort him until Lillie came to preside over his household.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

WEDDING BELLS.

"Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time."

—*Milton.*

FIFTEEN months have gone by. Deena and Arthur have been married six months, and are as happy as the memories of the past will allow them to be. We are now on the eve of another event. One event follows so rapidly on the steps of another that we can only gaze and wonder.

There is quite a gathering at Arthur Templeton's home. George and Pauline are there looking contented and happy. Deena is not like the sad-faced woman whom we first saw at Joe Hammond's. Arthur Templeton is devoting his time to the entertainment of his guests. Ida and Fred came at an early hour with presents and flowers.

"These are for Lillie," she said as she placed several lillies of the valley, orange blossoms and

roses in Lillie's room. "I have been saving them for weeks for this occasion."

Lillie is all blushes and smiles. It is the eve of her wedding. In a few hours she will leave all these dear faces to enter on the voyage of life as Mark's wife. There is happiness inexpressible in the thought that she is to wed the man of her choice; yet she can but feel sad when she remembers that she is soon to be separated from those scenes and faces which had long been so dear to her.

Though Deena Templeton rejoices in her sister's happiness, yet she is downcast and melancholy when she reflects that her sister is soon to leave and live so far away from her. Though she could scarcely restrain her tears, she determined to continue cheerful and hopeful while in her sister's presence. They purposely avoided meeting each other's eyes, lest they should break down and mar the pleasure of the occasion.

* * * * * * * * *

My work is nearly done. I sit now alone with this child of my brain. When I contemplate the struggles, trials and temptations to which our noblest and best are subjected I am appalled. The current of my thoughts turns to that wee laddie in the cradle yonder, who will by and by call me aunt. When I hear his baby accents or see him clapping his hands with delight,

I ask myself what is before this precious child. All too soon he will lay aside his baby clothes and ways and become a boy. He must have a boy's liberty, for if it is not given him, he will take it. I want him to grow to be a wise and good man, and he is certainly a child of promise. Only a short distance down this very street there is not a school-house, church, or even a place of innocent amusement, but a dram-shop. When he becomes a boy he will be told that this is a dangerous place for boys, and be forbidden to enter it. But boys love danger and forbidden fruit always looks tempting. He will in all probability at some time venture slyly to creep into that den, to see if it is really the abode of monsters. Punishment may follow, but that will only rouse his rebellious spirit. His mother's tears may be regarded as only the emotion of a silly woman. Soon he will be at man's estate, and then no one can prevent his entering the establishment he was in childhood forbidden to visit. He may come to think that it hastens his manhood to become early a frequenter of that saloon. I tremble now for his future.

What are we going to do about it? Work for prohibition. But prohibition will never be practicable, many say. Of course, it will not, if you do not love your boys, your country or homes.. Our forefathers gained for us our independence, the curse of slavery was swept from

our fair land, and now, are you going to let a curse equally as great and degrading exist? Will you run the risk of that child of yours coming under the bondage of rum, under the blind belief that prohibition is not practicable? Cast aside that thought which has brought only woe and misery to our country! Set to work to save the boys and redeem the men.

Again I pause, rest my head in my hand, slowly close my eyes, and baby Charley's sweet face comes again before me. His face appears oftenest to me, because he is nearest my heart. Every boy that I ever knew is dimly outlined in my mind. I get up and kneel at the cradle, beside the placid sleeper, and gaze lovingly upon his innocent face. My heart sends up a prayer, "God save the boys," but Charley stands in the front. My tears of anxiety bathe his head, when I think that his father is no better than was John Denesmore, nor is he more promising than Guy Denesmore was in his childhood. How can we save the boys?

Is prohibition practicable? If not, how can we make it practicable? Just give the liquor traffic the merit it deserves. Class it with robbery and murder, and make it so disreputable that no man can openly carry on the business and be regarded a good citizen. This crime will then, like all others, be driven into dark channels where it will not be so liable to corrupt the entire youth of

the land. Many units make a mighty number. Those who take the stand for temperance are not alone. The mountains of difficulty are full of the horsemen and chariots of the Lord. There are many already in the field, nobly fighting for the cause of the right, and combating humanity's worst foe. Help correct society and spend not these golden moments in abusing the saloon-keeper. Redeem him with the rest of humanity, if he will persist in violating the law after the traffic has been made unlawful, then deal with him as you would with any other violator of law.

Again at my table, I close my eyes and mentally I seem to review these pages. The door opens, some one has entered the room and leans over me. How my heart beats, who is it? I open my eyes, and lo, Pauline's sweet, yet tenderly sad face, and eyes that shine with the light of an inward peace, look down upon me. Scarce knowing what I am speaking, I say:

"I dared not open my eyes when you first entered. I did not know, but you were a liquor demon come to carry me off."

She looked very gravely at me and said:

"You have written these pages, attempting to picture the miseries caused by *The Worst Foe* and now you are afraid that the thing is coming to carry you off." Smiling at the thought, she continued: "You are shrinking from your duty."

"You know, my dear, about what I am writing; none better than you."

"Yes," she replied, "we should be zealous in this work, remembering that hearts are not crushed with the fall of this monster. Noble ambitions are not cast to the dust by the overthrow of king alcohol. Instead, broken hearts are bound up and noble ambitions gratified."

Slowly she turned the pages, reading a bit here and there. Tears were in her eyes as she bent over and kissed me on the forehead, saying: "God bless your efforts, dear sister, for this noble cause. Do you hear the bells? They are golden bells. It is Lillie's and Mark's wedding day. I must away."

She is gone, and still the chime of those sweet bells is ringing in my ears.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

CONCLUSION.

"The King's a beggar, now the play is done
All is well ended, if this suit be won,
That you express content, which we will pay,
With strife to please you, day exceeding day.
Ours be your patience then, and yours our parts;
Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts."

—*Shakespeare.*

INDULGE us, kind reader, a few moments longer before we lay down our pen. Great reforms are usually of slow growth. The leader of any reformation is branded a lunatic, an enthusiast, a fanatic. Luther perhaps was abused more in his time than any other man. The movers in the old abolition movement have been branded with every abusive name and epithet that could be applied to them. The very men who abused them most are now loudest in their praise. The fanatic has been changed to the martyr. The time will come, and thank Heaven, it is not far distant, when this prohibition question will sweep the country like a wild fire. Then the honest and brave, who, amid sneers and scoffs, have steadily fought the mons-

ter, will be called martyrs instead of fools and lunatics. The leaders will live in sculptured bust or finely chiseled marble, long after their bodies have mouldered in the grave. They may never live to hear their own praises sung by mortal tongues, but in that Heaven to which all the righteous are wending their way, they will find their rich reward.

We cannot conclude until we have briefly traced the career of some of those humble characters, with whom we have in the course of our story come in contact. The reader has not forgotten the little band of boys organized by William Strasmore. They were in the humbler walks of life and every one had suffered directly or indirectly from the influence of alcohol. The resolve made at the grave of their murdered friend was strictly kept. For the sake of their dead benefactor and by the blood he had shed, they vowed eternal enmity to the poison. This vow was kept. Not only did they abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages themselves, but did all in their power to overthrow the monster. Theirs, from the moment the earth closed over William Strasmore, became an aggressive warfare. For months and years all seemed dark and discouraging. Thick, heavy clouds obscured the temperance horizon, and the feeble voices of a few who were nobly battling for humanity could not be heard amid the shouts of the exultant liquor men.

But they despaired not. Bill Barnes, as we have seen in a former chapter, started a temperance reform by providing cold water fountains in the cities for thirsty, famishing mortals. Bill studied law and was admitted to practice. He rose rapidly in his profession and from a gutter-snipe he became a dignified professional gentleman. His friend, George Greene, became a minister of the gospel. Henry Jones, too, arose to be an intelligent and useful citizen, pledged to a deathless war on the drinking usages of Society. These three friends, under that strange providence that shapes the destinies of men, became most influential workers for the temperance cause in the great state of Iowa. Thus, William Strasmore, though dead, yet speaks to millions by means of their successful efforts through the press and on pulpit and platform.

Each became an orator, for his heart was in the work. Judge Elshea, who had for years been playing hot and cold on the subject of temperance, at one time taking one side and next day an opposite view, was not slow to denounce them as fanatics, and declare prohibition impracticable. Bill Barnes, who was forced to practice before the judge, was snubbed by his honor for his temperance proclivities, and the court, when off the bench, took care to declare, when opportunity offered itself, that Mr. Barnes was a fool and unworthy the confi-

dence of any man having causes to litigate. Though he temporarily injured Barnes, it was the upbuilding of him in the end. Judge Elshea and his friends, in their zeal to punish Barnes, went so far as to make him popular by their persecutions.

"William," said George Greene to Mr. Barnes one day when they were together in the latter's office, "what can be done in the way of putting an end to this unholy liquor traffic."

"There is to be an election of members of the State Legislature this fall, is there not?" said Mr. Barnes.

"Yes."

"Then, let us make *Prohibition* our battle cry and begin the fight to win."

"What shall we do?"

"Elect Prohibition members to the legislature and force a vote to the submission of the question."

"The idea is a good one."

"Remember Strasmore, George, and our vow at his grave. Let it nerve us for the conflict and we will be sure to win."

"Whom will we nominate from this county?"

"One of our own little band, who twelve years ago stood about the grave of Strasmore and promised Heaven never to forget his death,—I mean Henry Jones."

"A capital idea. But even if we carry this

county, it will only be a drop in a bucket compared to the great State."

"We will carry the State. Each of us must turn orator and sweep the country over. You and I will stump the State, and let Henry take care of his own county."

The campaign that followed is a matter of history. Not only Iowa, but other States gave their attention to its progress. Wherever they went, those two orators drew thousands of hearers and followers. The liquor men cursed them, and tried to refute their arguments, but it was all in vain. They were overwhelmed by the band of William Strasmore and the scores of others who joined them. They called other friends, who had belonged to their boy organization to help them, and soon they became known far and near as the "Strasmore Legion." The cause of Prohibition grew so rapidly that the liquor men for once were cowed, and the temperance movement triumphed in the State. The liquor men now sought by cunning to gain what they had lost at the ballot. Judges Elshea, and Wiley, and Walcutt, and others of their kind, who tried to play at temperance, were consulted by the liquor men. They shook their heads knowingly and declared that the whole thing was unconstitutional, and Allen O'Demagogue joined loudly in the cry. The first test case was before the honorable Judge Elshea, and

he, elevating his feet to the desk in front of him, clasped his hands behind his head, and listened long and attentively to the argument on the constitutionality of the liquor law, by the whiskey attorney. Though the Judge had made up his mind before the case was argued, he tried to appear very impartial, with a strong desire to help the Prohibitionists if he could. There were a few Prohibition votes which he might want to re-elect him. Judge Elshea had always occupied such a high position in society that no one had ever yet dared to attack him openly. So adroitly had his honor managed affairs that he was thought by some to really sympathize with Prohibition. Yet, when the case was argued, he declared the precedents so strong, that he must decide the law unconstitutional. The case was appealed to the Supreme Court, and there the decision was affirmed.

"Well, what shall we do now," asked Rev. George Greene. "It would seem that we have had our work for nothing."

"No, we have not," Bill Barnes answered, "we have only taken one step. Perhaps the other step should have been taken first. Now we must set to work to elect Prohibition judges."

"A good idea."

It was only a year until the next election. Judge Elshea was a candidate for re-election, and he soon found that many of his temperance friends

were about to desert him. In vain he strove to show them that he was forced to make his ruling according to law. They began to understand the Judge and his law.

The name of William Barnes was proposed in the convention held by the Prohibitionists, as a candidate for Judge of the Circuit. The name was received with thunders of applause, and the nomination made unanimous. Judge Elshea was at first inclined to treat his opponent with contempt, but ere long he learned that he was no mean antagonist. Taking the stump, he denounced the judge so boldly and openly that some of Mr. Barnes' friends trembled for his safety. Such courage had never been exhibited before, and all were astonished and appalled. The result of the election was that William Barnes was elected to fill the place Judge Elshea had disgraced. With Henry Jones in the legislature, Bill Barnes on the bench, and George Greene in the pulpit, who can say that William Strasmore's work was not bearing fruit.

Not only did the temperance people elect Prohibition judges for the lower courts, but even the Supreme Court was made up of Prohibition members. Almost the first case which came before Judge Barnes was a liquor case. The old ruse of non-constitutionality of the law was raised. The court room was crowded and the scene became thrilling. Liquor men with

haggard faces, and temperance men with anxious looks, were elbowing each other, watching the countenance of the young Judge. His features were immovable as his purpose, and he gave his opinion in a clear, distinct voice. Whiskey men retired muttering curses—low, but deep, and the better class of citizens secretly rejoiced. Rev. Mr. Greene went home, retired to his closet, and offered up a prayer of thanksgiving.

The liquor men had one hope left, and that was that they might appeal the case to the Supreme Court, and have it reversed, but the Supreme Court was changed, and not so "technical" as the former court. Judge Barnes' opinion was re-affirmed, and the whiskey men gnashed their teeth. Slowly, yet surely, the cause of Prohibition had gained ground. The old era is passing away, and on the dawn of a new century, great things may be expected.

And now, dear reader, I must bid you farewell. Think not that I have drawn on my imagination for the facts of this tale. They who suffered and are gone, once lived before my eyes. Pauline and George, Mark and Lillie, Maria and baby Pauline, and the deeply wronged Deena, are happy now in their security from the clutches of "The Worst Foe," who, like the devil-fish, blackens all waters to escape with his prey. The Strasmore Legion still bears on the banners of prohibition. But the years are coming rapidly,

when through struggle the victory shall dawn, and the grander Banner of the Prince of Peace float over every land. Yet ere that time, the separate rivers of our lives may have glided on and on, and their tiny ripple or stormy roar be lost in that silent ocean that rolls round all the world.

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